



WARLOCK OF THE MAGUS WORLD

BOOK 01

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Warlock of the Magus World

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Synopsis

-What happens when a scientist from a futuristic world reincarnates in a World of Magic and Knights?

An awesome MC is what happens!

A scientist's goal is to explore the secrets of the universe, and this is exactly what Leylin sets out to do when he is reincarnated.

Dark, cold and calculating, he makes use of all his resources as he sets off on his adventures to meet his goal.

Face? Who needs that... Hmmm... that guy seems too powerful for me to take on now... I better keep a low profile for now.

You want me to help you? Sure... but what benefit can I get out of it? Nothing? Bye.

Hmmm... that guy looks like he might cause me problems in the future.

Should I let him off for now and let him grow into someone that can threaten me..... Nahhh. kill-

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Chapter 1: Reincarnation

“My head really hurts....”

This was Fang Ming’s first thought upon waking up. It felt as if there was a cut on his head, hurting so badly that it seemed as if his head was about to split open.

The scene in front of him seemed like he was riding on a horse carriage. His body continued to bounce up and down along with the carriage’s movement, impacting his wound. It was so painful that Fang Ming had to suck in several sharp breaths.

Opening his eyes, he surveyed his surroundings.

What filled his vision were walls formed from hollowed planks. There were also quite a few fair-haired and blue-eyed youths sitting around him with their eyes closed as they rested. However, none of them glanced in his direction.

He seemed to be lying down on the floor. Feeling the ice-cold ground underneath him, Fang Ming knew that his body would not be able to bear lying down any longer, or he would probably catch a cold. He hurriedly struggled to get up.

At that moment, he felt a sharp pain lancing through his head.

The pain arrived suddenly, and brought many strange memories along with it. Fang Ming’s eyes rolled back as he fainted.

“Hi! Leylin! Wake up....”

Fang Ming heard this sound in his daze, and couldn't help but open his eyes.

“Is this reincarnation?” Fang Ming remembered very clearly that the last thing he had seen were the dazzling flames that had erupted from the energy reactor's explosion.

It was impossible to survive such an explosion without any method of self-protection.

Furthermore, on the planet he existed on, such a style of carriage and wooden planks were considered ancient antiques.

After organizing the new memories in his mind, Fang Ming gained some insight about his body and this world.

This was a realm similar to the European Middle Ages. A mysterious force also existed.

His current body was originally called Leylin Farlier, a son of a minor noble. As he had been tested to have the gift to become a Magus, his father, Viscount John Farlier, had pulled strings to allow him to become a Magus Apprentice. At the moment, he was on the horse carriage travelling towards a magus academy.

He saw that the one who had woken him up was a large, male youth.

He had thick eyebrows and large eyes, a tall and straight nose, and sparkling gold hair. Although his face was somewhat young and tender, his body was sturdy and well muscled, looking extremely manly.

Seeing that Fang Ming had awoken, the boy laughed happily , “Haha....Leylin, you’re finally awake. If you had awoken even a few more minutes later, you probably wouldn’t have been able to make it to dinner. I assume that you don’t want to starve!”

Fang Ming lowered his eyes. After some thought, he figured out this person’s identity.

“Thanks George!”

The youths who were together with him and heading towards the magus academy had all tested to be gifted to be Magi. This George was a legitimate son of a Count, and was also one of the favoured sons for that Count. In order to allow George to enter a magus academy, the Count had spent many resources and pulled strings.

“A count?” Fang Ming inwardly thought.

He flashed back to his current body’s father, Viscount John Farlier, whose holdings were equal in size to a city in his previous life, with thousands of soldiers under his command. In this world,

noble ranking was inevitably tied to personal strength. Since George's father was a Count, his holdings were likely at least the size of several cities, and his annual income was probably a few thousand gold coins. With such finances and power at his disposal, he still had to take so much effort in order to send George to a magus academy. Fang Ming couldn't help but wonder how did his father manage to do the same for him.

As Fang Ming pondered the question, another sharp pain flashed through his head, causing another scene to appear in his mind's eye.

It was a dark room, with old musty shelves lining the sides, filled with an ancient air. The surroundings were chock full with dust.

Under a dim light, John Farlier solemnly passed a ring to Leylin, saying: "Dear Leylin, this is our Farlier Family's Heirloom Treasure, a promise from a Magus. At that time, my grandfather had helped an injured Magus, who had in return gifted grandfather with this ring, promising him that if one of his descendants had the gift to be a Magus, he could use this ring and enter any magus academy for free! Now, I am giving this to you, in hopes that you can be the Pride of the Farlier Family, and uphold our legacy..."

The ring!!!

Fang Ming's eyes narrowed, and his right hand involuntarily went to his chest.

Under his clothing, he could feel the solid touch, like a metal ring

was under there.

Heaving a sigh of relief in his heart, he thought to himself: Lucky! I'm not sure if those guys did not recognize it as a treasure, or perhaps there is some restriction. Either way, I'm lucky that this was not snatched from me!"

As a scientist in his former life, Fang Ming was extremely curious and interested in that mysterious strength, filled with the desire to research more about it.

Furthermore, he didn't want to be chased back home because he had lost such an important proof of entry.

Although I have taken over this body and accepted its memories, but I am still very different from the original Leylin. To his family members who have spent years with him, they would easily be able to see the difference! If they mistake it as him being possessed by the devil and perhaps beg or hire one of those mysterious magi to investigate, I might be found out...

However, if I can enter a magus academy, I will probably not return home for at least several years. By that time, if there are any changes in behavior, it would be considered normal. Furthermore, to be a Magus, it is probably normal to be strange and eccentric; if I were to act the same as the Leylin of before, it would be deemed strange then!

Just as he was in deep thought, a pair of strong large hands suddenly assisted him to his feet.

“What are you thinking about?” George asked.

“No... Nothing!” Fang Ming quickly shook his head, then clutched his head again, as it was still in pain.

He suddenly spun his head around and looked at George, causing George’s heart to clutch suddenly, as if he was being stared at by a venomous snake.

“Dearest George, why didn’t you wake me up earlier, and let me just lie on the floor like that for so long?” Fang Ming rolled his eyes and asked.

“Heh heh! I saw you having such a nice sleep, and thought you liked to lie down there!” George scratched his head abashedly. However, his eyes sparked with a cunning gleam.

Under Fang Ming’s murderous glare, he finally raised his hands in surrender: “Fine! Fine! Who asked you to offend my goddess. Offending her is still fine, as bros, I am not such a petty person. Alas, the entire carriage is now treating you like an enemy, and I do not want to be isolated as well!”

“Offend? Goddess?” Fang Ming scratched his head, until he suddenly remembered why he was beaten up.

It was a girl named Bessita. Although she was only 15 years of age, but she her body was already developed and voluptuous, in

addition to her watery big eyes, was a huge draw to the lecherous Leylin.

The original Leylin was no gentleman. He had lost his virginity at the age of twelve, and after that he had either seduced or forced his way with many others, and had by now slept with more than a hundred women!

He had been known as the Scourge of his father's holdings. As Fang Ming finished exploring the memories, he rolled his eyes once again in disdain. No wonder this body was so weak and frail, it wasn't just because of the injuries!

Thinking back, it was clear that Leylin had been too used to causing trouble in his own territory, and hadn't been able to control himself when he saw Bessita.

The first few times, it was still rather normal; flirting and making passes. Near the end, he had started resorting to violent means. When Fang Ming saw these memories, he couldn't help but label the original as an idiot.

That Bessita is a princess of a small country! And Leylin still wanted to rape her. Is his brains filled with glue? Sheesh!

What happened after this goes without saying. Leylin was taught a savage lessons by the bunch of '[Flower Guardians](#)', had actually died because of the beatings, which had eventually benefitted Fang Ming.

[Literal Translation of 护花使者, pretty much her wannabe

escorts/protectors]

Heh heh! This Bessita, it seems she isn't as simple as I thought, how scheming! Fang Ming gave a cold laugh as he thought.

Fine! No matter what, since I have taken over your body, if I have the chance, I will take revenge for you! As for now, I am Leylin Farlier!

Fang Ming swore in his heart.

In Leylin's memory, he had not seen any signs of Asians, nor had he heard anything about China. In this new Western styled world, if he used his own Chinese name, it would be too dangerous!

When he looked around, he realized that there was no longer anyone else in sight within the spacious carriage. It was no wonder that George had come to call him.

"No matter what, I still have to thank you! George, do you have any medicine?" Fang Ming stood up and stretched his body. Although it still hurt in a few places, but it did not impede his movement, and the wound at the back of his head had already become a scab.

"Heh heh...I knew that you'd need this!" George laughed as he tossed a small bottle over, "This is my family's secret product. I heard that it's usually used during Knight's training, and is extremely effective against any bodily injuries!"

As George spoke, he looked around furtively: “Alright! Dinner is about to start. I’m going to head there first, you should apply the medicine quickly and hurry over too. Remember, do not tell anyone else about our friendship!”

After he finished speaking, he had ran off like a gust of wind!

Looking at George’s figure disappear into the distance, Leylin couldn’t help but massage his forehead. It looks like this Leylin has truly stirred up a hornet’s nest. Was it such a big deal? In Leylin’s memories, it seems like in this world, sexual relations are rather open...

At this point, he couldn’t do anything to remedy the situation. Swiftly taking off his clothes, Leylin quickly rubbed the medicine all over the injuries on his body.

“Hiss... This damned George. Couldn’t he help me apply the medicine before leaving?” Leylin drew several sharp cold breaths as he applied the medicine.

The medicine was extremely effective. As soon as he applied it, there was a cooling sensation and the pain vanished.

After he had dealt with the wounds on his body, Leylin put on his clothes and opened the carriage door.

Whoosh!!!

A gentle breeze blew across, and the sun was setting in the horizon, painting everything around with a golden hue.

“No matter what, it feels so good to be alive!!!”

Leylin’s eyes moistened as he muttered.

Looking at the surroundings, he noticed several of the large carriages forming a circle to make a crude temporary campsite, with a large fire in the middle.

There were many youths around the fire, sitting and resting on cloth mats laid on the ground, laughing and playing with each other, while eating the bread in their hands.

Leylin walked towards a table where there were quite a few breads and juices placed. According to his memories, this was where food was distributed.

When he approached the area, he saw that there were a few people queuing up. As they spotted Leyin, they looked over at him with a look of despise.

Although Leylin thought of himself as thick-skinned, he still found it somewhat difficult to endure.

Still, he did not leave. No matter what, he still had to eat.

“Hurry up!” A hoarse voice rang out.

“So...Sorry! Lady Angelia!” A freckled boy quickly apologised and took his share of food before running away.

[Beep! Danger Alert! Danger Alert!]

[You are extremely close to the source of danger.
Recommendation: The Host should move at least 1000 meters away!]

Chapter 2: A.I Chip

“This is????”

Leylin’s eyes widened when he heard the mechanical voice in his brain.

“Isn’t this my old assistant A.I. Chip from my previous life? How did it reincarnate with me? This is unscientific!!!”

Leylin found it hard to believe. He said in his brain, “A.I. Chip! Scan my mind and search for locations of assistant systems!”

[Beep! Scan complete! No strange existences were found in the Host’s mind!]

After a mere moment, the A.I. Chip’s mechanical voice replied back.

“Now scan my entire body, and display my body’s stats!”

Another mechanical sound.

[Beep! Scan complete!]

[Fang Ming (Leylin Farlier). Strength: 0.4, Agility: 0.5, Constitution: 0.4, Status: Bleeding from back of the head, many injuries to the soft tissues]

[No A.I. Chips present in the Host's body!]

A 3D hologram appeared before Leylin's eyes. It displayed Leylin's own body, and showed stats on the side.

“No A.I. Chip? I know the A.I. Chip is equivalent to a material substance. How did it follow my soul through reincarnation? Leylin thought to himself, It seems like during the explosion or my reincarnation, some abnormality occurred, and the A.I. Chip's functions fused with my soul.....”

“If I was still in my previous world, this would be a major discovery! It not only confirms the existence of the soul, but also shows that physical matter and the soul can possibly transform each other! This is definitely something that group of old men in National Academy of Sciences would go crazy over. It's a pity that I'll never see them again!”

This kind of A.I. Chip was essential to the scientists in the previous world. Because of issues with human rights and the conscious thought, this technology didn't have any intelligence of its own. It only had two functions: to analyze and to store

information.

Its analyzing ability could only be used by following the Host's commands. It gathered data samples and reached a deduction based on simulations.

Its storage abilities were even simpler. It could use the data gathered from everything the Host's five senses experienced and record it down. Based on calculations from the previous world, this kind of A.I. Chip's storage area was enough to record over 10,000 years' worth of events.

“Why did the A.I. Chip and the soul fuse together? I'll ponder this kind of question later when I have the ability and qualifications to do so! But with this A.I. Chip, I have some resources in this world!”

The corners of Leylin's mouth suddenly lifted to form a brilliant smile. He knew that in this Middle Ages period, having a crystallization of future technology would definitely make his future path extraordinary!!!

“But! This Leylin's physique is really...” Leylin was speechless after seeing the stats in front of him.

This stats displayed were based off of each aspect of an adult's physiology as a standard. Theoretically, the average adult's displayed stats would all be around 1. Although this Leylin was only 13-14 years old, his stats were still too low.

“Hm? That’s not right. It’s possible that the bodies of the people in this world are generally weaker! A.I. Chip, scan the bodies of the people around me and display their stats!”

[Beep! Task established! Beginning the collection of stats!]

In almost an instant, 3D holograms of the surrounding people’s bodies appeared in front of Leylin, displaying their stats.

[Name: Unknown. Gender: Male. Strength: 0.9, Agility: 1.1, Constitution: 0.8]

[Name: Unknown. Gender: Male. Strength: 1.2 Agility: 0.8, Constitution: 1.0]

[Name: Unknown. Gender: Female. Strength: 0.8, Agility: 1.2, Constitution: 0.7]

“Well then! It looks like the bodies of these people are stronger than those from my previous world. This Leylin is even inferior to a girl.....I’m starting to feel embarrassed for him.....”

Leylin scanned his surroundings. The people were all youths around his age. There was a seemingly very delicate and frail girl whose stats were tons better than Leylin's, causing him to feel utter despair.

“It looks like this Leylin is a useless leech, an excessively lecherous piece of trash with no control!”

[Name: Unknown, Gender: Male, Strength: 3.3, Agility: 2.5, Constitution: 3.2. Alert! Alert! This life form is excessively dangerous. Recommendation: Host should immediately move at least 1000 meters away!!!]

A red warning continued to flash 3 times in succession. This caused Leylin to fall into a state of shock.

“Average stats of 3.0!” After Leylin scanned the information several times to double check that the A.I. Chip hadn't made a mistake, he was left completely speechless.

“Even the world champion doesn't have these kind of stats. In the previous world, this person could easily dress up as Superman!”

As a scientist, Leylin understood well that a stat of 3.2 meant the person's fighting capabilities, viral resistance, and body recovery speed was all three times greater than a normal person's!!!

The various stats displayed being threefold greater than a typical person's wasn't as simple as just adding numbers together. What kind of concept was this?

It meant that this person could defeat dozens of people empty-handed, and even get past a group attack by 100 people. In his previous world, he really counted as a Superman!

"I'm afraid that a person with these kinds of stats could only be created by genetically modifying their biochemistry in a lab. Moreover, only the minimum would be reached! This world is indeed not a simple one!"

Leylin thought to himself as he looked at the person possessing these terrifying stats once again.

It was a black-clothed person responsible for handing out food. He looked like he was middle-aged, and he had a scar on his face that stretched from his forehead to his lip. It pretty much split his entire face in half, and looked extremely fierce.

The freckled boy from before was completely frightened by this person.

"This is the academy's servant responsible for receiving us. It's said that he's not a magus, yet he's already so frightening. What would a real magus be like then?"

Leylin suddenly discovered that a strong interest and curiosity

about the profession of a magus had arisen inside him. It was to the point where he was itching to go to the academy now and investigate everything.

The line was really short, and it was soon Leylin's turn. After the black-clothed, scarred man gave Leylin a piece of white bread and some juice, he wordlessly waved Leylin away with an impatient expression on his face.

If it were the previous Leylin, even if he didn't dare to drag this guy out and lash him a few times because it wasn't his home, his expression still would've turned quite ugly, and would probably have ranted at the man a bit.

But the current Leylin was naturally not that stupid. Following his memories, he formally bowed and said, "Thank you! Mister!"

The black-clothed man remained expressionless as he watched Leylin turn to leave.

"Ai! I didn't think that Leylin would really seem like a noble after bowing!" The two youths behind Leylin couldn't help but secretly whisper to each other.

"Hurry up and move forwards!" The scarred man shouted, suddenly blasting the two's eardrums.

The great sound scared one of the youths so badly that he fell down onto the ground.

Leylin ignored the discussion behind him as he surveyed the area with a cold gaze. He then bitterly smiled, “Great! I’m really an unwelcomed person!”

When he looked at George, George also hurriedly turned his head away. His hands made a secret gesture behind his back.

“Eh! Fine! Since you gave me the medicine, I won’t expose you!” Leylin sighed, then found a relatively remote place. Without caring whether or not the ground was carpeted, he sat down and began to eat heartily.

“This plain white bread isn’t as good as that from the previous world! But according to Leylin’s memories, this is already considered a food that one can only get during celebrations!”

Leylin thought as he ate.

Based on Leylin’s memories, the production capabilities in this world were quite low. The white bread was an aristocrat’s food. Normal, minor nobles could only enjoy it during celebrations of major holidays.

To typical peasants, who only had hard, nutritionless black bread to eat, this was a supreme delicacy.

When he thought of the black bread as hard as rocks from his memories, Leylin sighed, “It’s a good thing that I’m quite

fortunate; regardless of whether I'm a noble or a magus, I'm still in the upper levels of this world, so I won't need to suffer!"

He ravenously wolfed down the bread, and downed the juice in one gulp as well. Leylin then wiped his mouth in satisfaction, and returned to the carriage.

Based on the experience in his memory, noble youths would set up tents in camp and rest for the entire night before moving again. However, it was clear that nobody would invite Leylin to join them. He didn't have a tent himself, so he could only sleep on the cold and hard carriage!

"When I looked just now, there seemed to be 50 some apprentices, 25 black robes, and 3 of the highest status white robes!"

When he thought of the the scene just now when he had been noticed from a distance, the hairs on Leylin's body rose.

Added on to that, the A.I. Chip's warnings of [Discovered an unknown radiation source!], [Received disturbance from unknown force field, impossible to scan!]

This formed a shadow in Leylin's heart!

"It looks like even with the A.I. Chip, I'm still extremely weak in this world! But it's precisely due to this reason that I desire to obtain the strength of a Magus!"

Leylin's eyes seemed to light up in flames.

"It's best if I sleep earlier! I still need to hurry on with the journey tomorrow!"

Leylin took off his jacket and laid it on the ground to make his sleeping more comfortable.

"So far, since this journey was started, it's already been over 3 months. We've passed through a few dozen kingdoms, yet we still haven't reached our objective. These ancient transportation conditions are really....."

He closed his eyes and fell into a daze. After some time, the carriage door opened with a bang.

Leylin suddenly sat up. His nose was then filled with the scent of a rose.

It was sweet and aromatic, extremely pleasing to the nose. It also made his body throb as to invoked his memories.

"Ley...Leylin! Are you well?" A pleasant, female voice said.

"Bessita? Please come in!" Leylin moved his body.

The fragrant scent in the carriage suddenly grew more powerful

as a beautiful young girl entered.

She had fair skin, and wore red, tight-fitting clothes that accentuated her voluptuous curves.

What was even harder for Leylin to forget was this girl's platinum hair and eyes like crimson jewels. Combined with her beautiful face, it presented an exotic charm.

This was the girl that caused Leylin to be beaten up, and even lose his life, Bessita!

“May I ask if you have anything to ask me?” Although this girl had developed quite well, and seemed extremely enticing to Leylin, having come from a different world and experiencing an endless barrage (of beauties), this girl was only somewhat good-looking to Fang Ming.

His attitude was extremely cold and indifferent.

It was clear that this manner somewhat shocked the young girl, as the words she was about to say didn't leave her mouth.

After a long period of silence, she pulled out a small, glass bottle and placed it in Leylin's hands, “This... this is a medicine for injuries. If you apply it to your body, it'll help you! I'm... sorry!”

The girl bowed, revealing the ample, snow-white curves of her chest, causing Leylin's heart to race.

Chapter 3: Knight

After she made her apology, the girl ran off like a startled little fawn, leaving her wonderful scent behind.

Looking at the disappearing red figure in the distance, Leylin was rather puzzled. “It was clearly Leylin who had assaulted you, why did you come to apologise? Is there something wrong with your brain?”

He touched the bottle in his hand, thinking to himself: “Did I misjudge her earlier? Could this Bessita be a kind-hearted girl?”

Leylin studied the glass bottle in his hand curiously. “It seems like they already have the technology to produce glass. Although, judging by the workmanship, it still seems rather rough, it is quite decent already!”

As he opened the bottle cap, a medicinal fragrance wafted out.

Following the habits of his past life, Leylin immediately said: “A.I Chip! Scan this medicine and analyse its components!”

[Beep! Task Established! Begin Scan!]

[Discovered unknown components. Starting simulated

experiments!]

[Experiments complete! Unknown Medicine has effect of strong itching! Duration: 7 days!]

“Eh!” Looking at the results of the experiment, Leylin was struck speechless. “I retract my previous statement; that girl is rather blackhearted!”

However, he soon had the feeling of an adult being pranked by a naughty kid.

“She is still a child after all! She can’t use truly malicious tricks! Perhaps if it were a few years ahead, the bottle would be full of deadly poison instead!”

Looking at the bottle in hand, Leylin thought about it and decided to keep it. “I’ll just keep this for now, who knows when it might come into handy in the future!”

After Bessita left, no one else came to disturb him.

Leylin lay back down. Though it seemed as if he were sleeping, his mind was actually working in overdrive as he thought through things.

“It seems like there shouldn’t be any problems or risks of being found out by going to a magus academy. Those white robed figures should be Magi, and I have walked by them a few times without drawing attention. It seems like they are also unable to detect anything strange about me. This means... entering a magus academy should be relatively easy in that sense.”

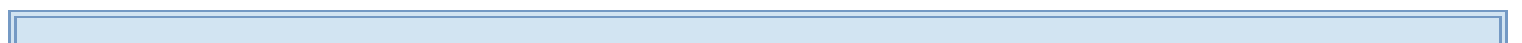
“However, according to rumours, Magi are all secretive and cruel, at least according to what Viscount John heard. It also seems that in the academies, there is extremely fierce competition amongst the apprentices of the same level despite it being against the rules to kill one another. I need to at least have some form of self-protection.”

As he thought about that, he once again touched the ring hung around his neck, and held it in his hands.

The ring was jet black and nondescript. Within the inner ring, there was a small ‘Y’ inscribed, along with elaborate inscriptions around it.

“With the technological advancements of the Middle Ages, to be able to inscribe such a complicated pattern onto the inner ring is incomprehensible! However, regardless of the issue, as long as it has to do with the mysterious Magi, it shouldn’t be surprising at all!”

Leylin muttered to himself, and issued another command: “A.I Chip! Scan the ring in my hands!”



[Beep! Task Established! Begin Scan!]

[Discovered unknown metallic components. Comparing to Data Banks. Insufficient Data. Unable to analyse!]

“As I’d thought! With the A.I Chip’s current level, it is still inadequate to analyse something that a Magus left behind!” Leylin sighed and stored the ring.

“How can I increase my power? This body of mine is truly too weak! It cannot even compare to those of the same age. That will not do.”

“If it were my past life, I could still undergo genetic modification. Alas, there is no such option here. Perhaps I should explore this Leylin’s memory once again, and see if there are any methods...”

Leylin thought to himself once again, then found a comfortable spot to lie down, thinking out aloud in his mind: “A.I Chip! Scan the entirety of Leylin’s memory and arrange it!”

[Beep! Task Established! Starting arrangement!]

In Leylin’s former world, the world of science had always been of

the opinion that the majority of the human brain's power was not being harnessed. Amongst that power was the ability to access every memory since birth.

Some memories, even if the person in question could not recall them, were actually still stored somewhere in the brain!

Now, as Leylin gave the command, memories of Leylin's entire life, from birth to his being chosen as a Magus Apprentice and going on this journey, were all displayed in front of Leylin's eyes with the A.I Chip's assistance.

Every single memory, down to what was eaten in every meal, as well as their tastes, were retained and displayed in his mind.

Such a large mass of memory was just too confusing, and was also full of useless information. In the past, Leylin had only taken what he had urgently needed, and ignored the rest.

At this point, with the help of the A.I Chip, he was arranging and sorting everything out!

[Data sorting has been completed!]

The A.I Chip notification sounded out.

“Create a new file, named ‘Leylin Farlier’, and save it!” Leylin

gave a new order.

[Beep! File created - Leylin Farlier!]

“New task, search the file for all possible methods for the host to improve strength quickly!”

[Beep! Task Established. Begin Search!]

In front of Leylin, innumerable amounts of data flashed past, seemingly forming a beautiful picture.

[Search Complete! Search Results - 453 methods!]

“So many?” Leylin paused a while as he thought. “Remove those with estimated success rate of 50% and below for the Host. Also, add another requirement: The Host must be able to carry out the strengthening method now. Begin filter!”

[Beep! Filter Complete. Remaining methods: 2!]

“Show them to me!”

[Method 1: Become a Magus.]

[Method 2: Begin Knight Trainng]

“Oh! Method 1 is not realistic at the moment; at least, not until I reach the magus academy, Otherwise, how could I possibly learn how to become a Magus? As for the Knight Training, I wonder what that is?”

As Leylin muttered to himself, he immediately assigned a new task. “A.I Chip, assemble all memory regarding Knight Training. Once it has been arranged properly, send it into my memory!”

After the data was directly transmitted to his brain, Leylin began to understand what a so-called Knight was.

In this world, there were several mysterious forces. However, the ones commoners had the most experience with were Knights!

Knights were warriors who had gone through tough training and had stimulated their inner life energy. Their physical attributes were way beyond that of a normal human.

To be a Magus, it required a specific kind of gift, and amongst tens of thousands of people, it was possible that there wasn't even one such person. However, being a Knight was different; as long as they were willing to put in the effort, anyone could become a Knight!

For these Knights, not only were their physical attributes several times that of normal humans, they were also well versed in using various weaponry, as well as in the killing arts. Some Knights even had special secret skills that could unleash a sudden burst of power!

The kingdoms of the common world, along with the nobility, were generally made up of Knights.

The Farlier Family which Leylin was part of was also a Knight Family. The original founder of the Family had fought in wars together with the King, and had accomplished much meritorious service. Thus, they had been awarded with the Viscount title, as well corresponding holdings.

After an overall sweep of the information, Leylin remembered a scene from the past.

It was a small jungle in the Viscount holdings, and John Farlier was wearing a warrior's outfit with a stern expression on his face. He was facing the infant Leylin as he said: "Today, I will teach you the Secret Skill that has been passed down in the Farlier Family: the Cross Blade Technique and the accompanying breathing techniques. You must remember that you can never teach this to anyone outside our Family!" At that moment, Viscount John's face

held an unprecedented stern look!

Alas, Leylin was still an infant at that point, and obviously did not put much thought into the matter, thus eventually forgetting it. Viscount John tried to force him into training a few times, but Leylin was so afraid of suffering and fatigue that while, even Viscount John had to give up.

“Sigh... an overly compassionate father leads to a failure of a son!” Only now did Leylin realise how the previous body’s owner had become such a [spoilt brat](#).

Spare the rod and spoil the child

Although the young Leylin only knew how to act like a playboy and had totally forgotten everything about the Knight Training for the Family Secret Skill, Leylin managed to recover all of it with the help of the A.I Chip.

Cross Blade Basic Sword Style: Horizontal Slash, Vertical Slash, Piercing Attack, Slanted Slash...

Footwork: Advance, Retreat, Dodge...

There was also the accompanying breathing technique. All of it appeared clearly in Leylin’s mind, along with the experience that Viscount John had imparted.

The memory finally ended with Viscount John emitting white mist from his mouth as he manipulated his Cross Blade, and

splitting a rock as large as a millstone in two with a single cleave!

“Hm... a Knight is considered the lowest mysterious power, yet they are already so strong! What kind of existence are those Magi who are high above Knights?”

Leylin's eyes burned with a fiery passion.

“Sigh! I have to take things step by step. I had better concentrate on this Knight's breathing technique first! Anyways, the Knight Training does not clash with Magus training. At least I'll have some measure of self defense for now.”

After a detailed analysis, Leylin discovered that the so-called breathing technique of this world was very similar to the internal qigong of his previous world, but was a lot more crude. It was very dependant on external stimulations to activate the inner life energy.

“According to rumours, if a warrior goes through the Knight Training and is still unable to activate their inner life energy, the only option is to enter the battlefield and go through fierce and bloody battles. This is the only other way to trigger their inner life energy, and become a Knight!”

“A.I Chip, transfer the knowledge of the Cross Blade Technique to me!” Leylin issued his next order.

Soon after, a large amount of knowledge regarding the technique

was transferred directly into his mind. It was etched deeply into his brain, as if he had been training in it since he was young.

“Isolate the Cross Blade Technique and save it into a new file, with the filename of ‘Cross Blade Technique Basics’!”

[Saved New File: ‘Cross Blade Technique Basics’]

As the A.I Chip notification sounded out in his mind, Leylin’s lips curved in a smile. With the help of the A.I Chip, his learning speed was unbelievably quick - fast enough to make any so-called genius commit suicide from shame!

“Now that I have all the memories of it, it is just a matter of finding a Cross Blade, and going through some actual practice. If all goes well, I have confidence in mastering it within ten days, bringing myself to Viscount John’s level!”

All these sword techniques are merely killing arts. The most important thing for Knight Training is the accompanying breathing technique!” Leylin muttered to himself.

“A.I Chip! According to my statistics, simulate and create the best model for me to start training the breathing technique!”

[Beep! Task Established! Host human model established!
Begin simulation...]

As the mechanical voice sounded out, a 3D model of a human figure appeared in front of Leylin's eyes. It was transparent and shimmering in blue light, and appeared exactly the same as him - a 13 year old youth with Western features, brown hair, big eyes and bushy eyebrows.

The 3D figure repeatedly started training the breathing technique, constantly adjusting the frequency, rate and magnitude. Slowly, a red line could be seen moving around in the 3D figure's body.

After a few minutes, the simulation ended, and the A.I Chip's mechanical voice sounded out once more.

[Simulation ended. Cross Blade Accompanying Breathing Technique - Time required for one revolution: 30 Minutes. 10 Revolutions will improve the Host's body by 0.05 Strength, 0.06 Agility and 0.03 Vitality. The improvements will gradually lessen as the stats improve!]

[Warning: If the Host goes through long term training of this technique, it will result in residual damage caused to the Host Body. Recommendation to think twice before starting.]

“Phew! This is indeed an impressive Knight Training technique! As long as I persevere, I will quickly be able to improve my power! Alas, I wonder if there is any way to remove the effect of the residual damage?”

Leylin said with a faint smile.

At this time, the A.I Chip’s voice suddenly sounded out.

[Do you wish to optimise the Breathing Technique? Y/N]

“The A.I Chip actually has such abilities?” A joyful look rose on Leylin’s face.

Chapter 4: Cultivation

“I never thought that this A.I Chip’s analyzing abilities could also work on the Knight breathing technique in this world!”

Leylin exclaimed and said: “Optimise immediately!”

[Optimisation initiating, estimated time: 125 minutes.]

“Yep, 125 minutes, which is over 2 hours; I can afford to wait!”
Leylin felt at ease.

After waiting rather impatiently, the two hours finally passed.
The A.I Chip’s voice sounded out right on time.

[The optimisation for the breathing technique has been completed. Time taken for breathing technique, 5 minutes 23 seconds, and the effects have all risen by 5%! The side effects of the injuries have vanished!]

“Very good!” This result made Leylin very satisfied.

If the effect was a 5% increase each time, then dozens of times, and even hundreds of times, would result in huge differences.

“Rumor has it that the Cross Blade Technique and the breathing technique were obtained by the founder after dozens of bloody battles, where he finally obtaining it from the corpse of a Knight. Amongst the many Knight families, it is considered to be the upper middle grade!”

“After the optimization of the breathing technique done by the A.I Chip, I’m afraid it might even be comparable to the secret scroll techniques of those smaller kingdoms!”

Leylin quietly pondered, and immediately said in an impatient manner: “A.I Chip, transfer the optimized breathing technique to the memory zone!”

The A.I Chip chip duly carried out its orders, and brought large amounts of images depicting the breathing technique back to Leylin’s mind.

After a few minutes of transfer, Leylin gently rubbed his head: “I feel a little giddy, but this is a normal occurrence!”

Right now his brain was filled with large amounts of memories about the breathing technique, and the many matching sequences of practised experience. Compared to an average person, he did not have to go on the roundabout route.

“I did not feel it in my previous life, but in this world, the A.I Chip really gives me a huge advantage compared to an average person!”

Leylin mumbled on: “With this A.I Chip’s ability to simulate and analyse, I am able to obtain the same result as a person who has to go through 10 years of hard work and experience, I only have to do exactly what the A.I Chip has presented, and I will be able to do things in the most accurate manner!”

The breathing technique had many contradictions, and some of them required more than verbal explanation to be understood.

One had to go through the experience of training, and go along some complicated paths., Only then would they be able to gain enlightenment.

But these things could all be avoided with the A.I Chip’s analysing abilities.

“I’ll give it a try!” Leylin thought, and his body laid on the floor in the shape of a cross.

According to the suggestions on the breathing technique which was presented by the A.I Chip, there was no need to have any special actions to complement it, but just to find the most suitable and comfortable position.

“First, I must hold my breath for 65 seconds, then take three long and one short breaths. The duration and frequency must be.....”

Leylin followed the description of the breathing technique, and gradually entered a state of cultivation.

He looked unconscious; his face was bright red and his temples throbbed, as if carrying out some kind of exercise.

As time passed, Leylin's face grew redder, and eventually, he began to perspire out some faint black coloured fluid.

After he had maintained this process for over 20 minutes, Leylin opened both of his eyes, and opened his mouth to exhale.

Phew!!!

A black coloured breath was exhaled just like this.

Within his body, some cracking noises could be made out.

Leylin stood up and moved his four limbs. His whole body was warm, as if he had just undergone a vigorous exercise.

“A.I Chip, display my body's statistics!” Leylin ordered.

[Leylin Farlier. Strength: 0.4 Agility: 0.5 Vitality: 0.4 State: Mild injury]

Leylin remained impassive: “Change the method of display, and move the data back by 10 decimal points. Also make comparisons

with the data before the cultivation.”

With Leylin’s orders, the image flickered, and the body statistics had shown 10 more decimal points. The last three numbers had not stop changing.

[Beep! After comparison, undergoing the Knight Training increases the Host’s Strength by 0.005, Agility by 0.006, and Vitality by 0.004]

The A.I Chip faithfully relayed the message.

“Mn! Because this was the first practice, the figures are still climbing up!” Leylin analyzed and said.

“I’ve only cultivated for a bit over 20 minutes, but, the data’s increase is already rather considerable. With perseverance, it’s just a matter of time before I have the stats of a black robed man!”

“Which is to say, those ten odd black robed men are all Knights!”

Leylin thought indifferently, “What a pity. According to my memory and the A.I Chip analysis, breathing techniques have cultivation limits. The Farlier Family’s breathing technique can only be practiced once a day. Additional practice will not only have no additional benefits, but will even cause harm to the body!”

“A.I Chip, are there any methods to let me increase the number of times I can practice the breathing technique?” Leylin asked.

[Medicinal items are required as a supplement.]

The A.I Chip feedbacked.

“List all the necessary medicinal items!”

[Quinoline element, marco 21, magnesium dioxide.....]

The A.I Chip chip listed a whole bunch of medicinal items, which were all from Leylin’s previous life.

“Is it possible to substitute any of them them with other medicinal items or herbs?” This seemed to be an obviously impossible task, but Leylin furrowed his brows and asked anyway.

[A sample is needed to analyse the medicinal properties. As of now, the data is insufficient!]

The A.I Chip chip prompted.

“As long as there is a way, then it’s alright!” Leylin heaved a sigh of relief.

He looked at his own body again. Because large amounts of sticky substance had been produced after the breathing technique training, his body felt very sticky, which was extremely uncomfortable to the touch.

Leylin frowned: “Looks like I’ll have to wash up first!”

He began to make his way out of the horse carriage. It was midnight by this hour, and the various young nobles were all sleeping soundly in the tent. Leylin quietly stepped out of the carriage and ran towards a small river that was nearby.

[Warning! A human is approaching!]

The A.I Chip prompted.

Leylin pretended that he was oblivious, and continued his advances.

“What are you trying to do?” A voice rang behind Leylin.

“So fast!” Leylin pupils shrank, “I had already been aware, but I was still unable to discover that he had arrived behind me. If he has any bad intentions, then I definitely won’t be able to resist in

any way!”

On the surface, he still pretended to be scared out of his wits: “Ah.....Who? Who?”

Leylin turned around his body to look back, seeing the black robed man who had been distributing the rations earlier in the day. Leylin remembered his name to be Angelo.

“Hel.....Hello! Sir Angelo! I feel that I’m a little dirty, and wanted to wash myself!” Leylin face was pale, as if he was frightened, and did not even have the capabilities to speak properly.

“Wash yourself?” The black robed man furrowed his brows, and wrinkled his nose. He could indeed smell a stench coming from Leylin.

“Alright! It is rather dangerous here at night, especially for young nobles like you bunch! Return quickly after washing!”

The black robed Angelo said. Not paying anymore mind to Leylin, he turned around and walked towards the heart of the horse carriage, where his tent was.

“Thank you for your reminders! Sir Angelo!” Leylin still said with a bow, no matter whether this man had heard him or not.

Always being careful had been part of his principles in life.

After seeing Angelo leave completely, Leylin then strode forward and headed towards the small river.

Angelo walked into his own tent and pulled down his mask, exposing his scarred face.

“The substance expelled from the body after practicing Knight breathing technique? What a nostalgic feeling! Looking at these young people reminds me of my inexperienced self from the past!”

“What a pity though, if I was also born of nobility, I wouldn’t need to practice the Knight breathing technique. I had even risked being part of a magus’s experiment and ended up in this state.....”

Angelo muttered. His shadow and the tent overlapped into one body, in-differentiable from each other.

Along the way, Leylin casually plucked the wild flowers and plants and popped them into his mouth from time to time.

“I think that black robed Angelo must have realised something. But it doesn’t matter, a nobility practising a passed down Knight breathing technique is just a normal occurrence.”

“Furthermore, he already has the physical qualities of a Knight, so he definitely has his own breathing technique, and won’t need to get mine. Besides, even if he wanted it, it wouldn’t be a big deal. I can just write it down and give him a copy...”

Since there was such a large difference in strength, Leylin did not have any intention of protecting the secrets of the Farlier Family.

However, it seemed that Angelo did not even fancy the Knight breathing techniques from small noble families.

Chewing a grass stalk in his mouth, there was a bitter taste to it. However Leylin did not mind, and even had some nostalgic feelings of back when he was little.

[The analysis is completed, no beneficial properties towards the Host's body can be observed!]

The A.I Chip voice rang.

“Pui!” Leylin immediately spit out the grass stalk in his mouth, and replaced it with another plant.

“Take down the shape and qualities of the plant earlier and save it. Now we will proceed with another round of analysis!” Leylin commanded in his mind.

[The task is completed! Beginning to analyse the qualities! From this experiment.....]

As the scene played out in his mind, Leylin could see very clearly the procedures of the A.I Chip.

[Beep! The experiment is completed. This unnamed plant has a mild paralysis effect!]

“According to Leylin’s memories, this is called the Tri-Night Grass huh, A.I Chip! Rename to Tri-Night Grass, and save it inside the database!”

[Beep! Saving completed!]

“Mmn! This is ‘Red Fruit’, the taste is not bad!” Leylin plucked a bunch of fruits on a pile of shrubs.

These fruits were only the size of Leylin’s thumb, and they had ripened on the top of a barbed vine. Their appearances were quite beautiful.

Leylin carefully avoided the barbs, and plucked one of the Red Fruits.

He placed it into his mouth and bit down with a crisp noise. A sweet juice was squeezed out from the fruit, filling his mouth.

“Mm! The taste is the same as an apple’s, just a tad sweeter.”
Leylin evaluated.

“A.I Chip! Analyse.....”

.....

Along the way, Leylin saved data about over 30 kinds of plants and herbs. Unfortunately, none of them were of any use to him.

He arrived at the small river. The ear-piercing sounds of the trickling stream of water crashing against the rocks broke through the silence of the night.

“A.I Chip! Scan the surroundings!” Leylin commanded. Even if the black robed Angelo hadn’t warned him, he still had confidence in avoiding danger with the A.I Chip.

[Beep! The surrounded area has been scanned! There are no dangers within a radius of 20 li!]

The A.I Chip faithfully reported the message.

“Well, it’s good that there is no danger. I don’t want to run back to the camp midway through my washing. That will definitely

make me the biggest laughing stock.....”

Leylin muttered and he took off his outer robes and underwear, entering the river naked.

The icy cold river engulfed his body, refreshing him.

“This water is really cold, I am beginning to miss the water heater from my past life!”

Chapter 5: Cross Blade

Ding!!!

Two steel swords clashed, emitting a crisp sound.

“Leylin! You are still not my match, give it up!” George used both hands and grabbed the hilt, and laughingly said.

“We aren’t done yet!” Leylin shouted, and his legs moved in a strange footwork, and once again initiated an attack.

“Hah!” George swung the long sword in his hands, which brought a sinister rustling of the wind.

The cross blade in Leylin’s hand swept, and blocked George’s attack.

“Good! Your parry posture is not bad!” George praised loudly. “Careful! My next attack will be to your left leg!”

“Bring it on!” Leylin made his preparations.

“Watch me!” George swung the two handed sword in his hands, and made a beautiful yet deadly arc towards him, sending it towards Leylin’s right leg.

Leylin retreated a step back, and blocked George’s two handed

sword in midair with his cross blade, “You definitely said the left leg, you didn’t keep your word!”

“Haha.....This is called tactics! It is to test your agility. My dad has always taught me, if one doesn’t know how to scheme, then one day he will surely be played to death by others! I only want to scheme, not to be the target of schemes!”

George laughed and said, and then pulled back his huge sword.

“No more! No more! You are getting better each and every time! I wouldn’t be able to beat you after a few more days!”

Scratching his puzzled head: ”Leylin! My sword technique is passed down by a Grand Knight, I put in much effort, training with blood and sweat, so much so that my teacher said that my swordplay is better than the average Knight! Yet, you who can fight me to a standstill, how could you have been beaten by Ourin?”

“These sword techniques were taught to me by my father when I was younger, unfortunately I had forgotten it, and I’m currently trying to practice more in order to recall it!”

Leylin clenched his fists, and his face turned red.

“Once I have strength, I will definitely seek revenge viciously, and break Ourin’s legs!”

He looks like a hot blooded youngster who was filled with determination after a setback.

“My dear Leylin, I believe in you. You will definitely fulfil your wish!” George patted Leylin’s shoulder.

And with another look of pity:” Currently, with your ability, it is already sufficient to seek your revenge!”

After sparring, George had a rough understanding of Leylin’s strength.

“Right now I can deal with one or two of them, but Ourin has five members!” Leylin was fretting over it.

Actually, he was already confident in dealing with Ourin and his gang, but without an excuse, how could he fooled George into continuously practicing with him?

“Oh right, you mentioned Grand Knights earlier, what are they?” Leylin remembered George’s complaint earlier, and casually asked.

“You are talking about the Grand knights? They are one realm higher than knights. No matter where they go, they are considered a great existence! If one is lucky, a king might even be hospitable to them! And if one is willing to pledge loyalty, then they will definitely become a troop commander!”

“Their physical body has been pushed to the extremes, and

rumours has it that apart from the long distance crossbow formation, even if a heavy cavalry troop were to charge at them, they won't be able to stop them from advancing!"

"So powerful!" Leylin muttered.

A commander of a troop has the same status of an Earl, and even Viscount John had to greet them if he saw one.

A heavy cavalry troop, is the peak of a troop's strength in this era of medieval weapons. Once they charged, even a smaller city's walls might fall. For a Grand Knight to actually be able to use merely their physical body to fight with them, how strong would they have to be?

Looking at Leylin who had a yearning expression on his face, George laughed out loud and consoled: "You don't have to envy them, a magus has an even more mysterious and stronger power compared to that of a knight. As long as you become a magus acolyte, your status is the comparable to that of a Grand Knight. And if you become an actual Magus, then congratulations, killing a Grand Knight is easier than stepping on an ant. The various kings from kingdoms will all want to strive to be first and fear to be last in stuffing their beautiful daughters on your bed....."

"A magus is that powerful?" Leylin was skeptical "Then why are the black robes so cold to us, who have the possibility of turning into a Magus? They are naught but knights!"

"Hmm about this? I am not too sure, but a Magus's status is

definitely very high. This was told to me by my father! I can swear it upon my Borunin Family's reputation."

George touched his nose, and replied rather awkwardly.

"Alright! Alright! It's not like I don't believe you!" Leylin felt a little exasperated.

Speaking within his heart "A.I Chip! Scan the person in front of me!"

[Beep! Name: George Borunin Strength: 1.9, Agility: 1.8, Vitality: 1.9, Status: Healthy]

George's stats could not have been achieved just by standard training. According to him, he had trained with the knights technique since he was young, and that was the reason he was able to achieve his current physique.

Warriors who had started cultivating the knight breathing technique and thus improved their physique, but had not been able to ignite their internal life energy yet, were commonly known as Preparatory Knights!

George's physique could be considered at the peak standard even amongst these Preparatory Knights!

This was also linked to his nobility status and being able to use large amounts of expensive medicine to assist in improving his body's physique.

“Alright, we have sufficient rest now, let us head back! I do not want to return too late and find those black robes staring coldly at me!”

George looked at his surroundings, and the bright moonlight coated the surrounding with a layer of silver colour light, the tranquility of the night was occasionally interrupted by insect cries.

Leylin did not wish to attract attention during the day as they were travelling, so he sneaked out to practice with George at night.

Naturally, this did not escape the black robes, but after a few encounters, Leylin found their attitude to be extremely cold. As long as one did not wander too far away from the camp and cause trouble, they would not care about them.

“Just once more round, we’ll head back!” Leylin said. “After this round, I’ll return this cross blade to you!”

“En.....Eh? George was a little absent minded, and then his eyes lit up. “ Are you finally done using it? Gus had been bothering me for it!”

In order to train in sword techniques, the first requirement

would be to have a cross blade!

As nobility, there were many youngsters that wore warrior's robes, with a sword attached to their waist.

However, the previous Leylin did not do so, the reason being that it was too heavy, and it restricted his movements!

Because he found it troublesome, the previous Leylin had travelled without even a dagger on him. This had caused Leylin now to be in the awkward situation where he was totally weaponless, without even a cross blade to practice with.

For the sake of practising, Leylin turned his attention to the first friend he saw when he woke up - George.

Using threats of exposing their friendship, he had made George lend him a weapon and train with him!

Thinking back when George's eyes had turned white, and had an expression as though he has met with a bad friend, Leylin laughed uncontrollably.

"Your swordplay is improving at an extremely fast pace! But do you really not need the cross blade?" George asked.

"I am rather familiar with Gus anyways so even if I were to lend it to you for a little while longer, it's not a big deal....."

“Thank you for your kind intentions! But I really do not need it!”
Leylin smiled as he rejected his offer.

After this period of sparring, he had already seen through the secret technique of the Farlier’s House. Furthermore, due to the the A.I Chip, his swordplay would always remain at its peak state so his skills will not go rusty due to not practicing the cross blade for a long time.

“Good, then we will fight one more match with the same rules. I will only use the same amount of strength as you will!”

As George said that, he picked up his big two handed sword and walked towards the centre of the patch of grass, his sword emitting a cold light as it reflected the moonlight.

Leylin had also walked over, “Come on! This time, I won’t hold back!”

He had thought of an experiment, and had sent out the invitation in order to carry it out.

“A.I Chip! Establish Task! Analyse the opponent’s strength and the surroundings to come up with the best plan to defeat him!”

[Task Establishing. Beginning analysis.]

[Simulation results - Host is unwounded, target loses his ability to fight. Please confirm on whether to turn on the vision aid?]

“Turn it on! “ Upon Leylin’s command, countless of blue lines appeared before his eyes that, as if turning the area into some sort of virtual world.

[According to the target’s reactions, there is a 99.98% probability that the first attack will be the Host’s right arm! Most Effective method of combating this: Sidestep, Jump Slash!]

Following the voice of the A.I Chip, the blue rays of light in his retina had already formed an image of George, raising his sword and slashing towards Leylin’s right arm.

“Heh! Watch the sword!” George shouted, and as expected, he initiated the attack first, waving his two handed sword. He charged over, the motion almost mirroring the projected image.

Leylin’s lips curled, and dodged the attack, and he raised both his hands along with the cross blade. Leaping up high, he viciously swung it down.

Jumping Slash!!

“Damn! How did this happen?” George cried strangely, and ducked the cross blade with a roll on the floor.

Leylin’s cross blade struck onto the floor, which brought up some of the mud and small pieces of stones.

George got up, a serious look on his face. He felt as if Leylin had predicted his attack, almost as if he had read his motions and knew them like the back of his palm.

“If you are not attacking, then I am going to counterattack!” Leylin said smilingly.

“Bring it on!” George stared nervously at Leylin.

Leylin gripped his cross blade, took a step forward and pierced forward! Every action and movement had all been accurately performed as seen from a textbook.

George made a blocking motion, but his body moved to the side instead, and as he dodged the pierce, he countered Leylin’s attack with a slash of his own!

[The best way to react: Left turn 50 degrees, Horizontal Slash!]

Following the A.I Chip instructions, Leylin dodged George's large sword, and sent a Horizontal Slash, almost slicing George as he slashed.

The more they fought, the more perspiration formed on George's face.

His every move and action had all been parried perfectly by Leylin, and his evading range had gradually decreased.

"I can't carry on like this any longer! I'll stake it all on this!" George fiercely swung his large sword, and sent it clashing with Leylin's.

Bang!!! A piece of silver light flew out and directly pierced into the grass. It was the large sword in George's hands! The blade had not stopped quivering as it let out a 'weng weng' sound.

In the sparring area, Leylin's cross blade sword had touched horizontally at George's waist. "You've lost!"

"Indeed! I lost!"

George muttered, and then immediately stared at Leylin : "How did you do that?"

"It is actually very simple, after training with you for a long time,

I have already remembered the sequence of your movements!” Leylin withdrew his sword and bowed smilingly.

“The.....sequence of my movements?” George repeated.

“Yes, to put it in a simple way, everyone has a habit when they strike. As long as you can remember them, then it will be easy to arrange a trap according to the enemy’s habits. I have used the same trick on you!”

“Phew!!!” George exhaled out a long breath, “I understand now!”

And then looking at Leylin momentarily, as if he was looking at a monster:” Your gift in sword technique is absolutely the best that I have ever seen!!! If you are not chosen to be a Magus Acolyte, I will definitely recommend you to go to a kingdom’s capital’s Imperial Knight Institute!”

Chapter 6: Disagreement

“Imperial Knight Institute huh?”

Leylin knew that the Imperial Knight Institute was the best knight's institute in Sarad Kingdom where George had come from. Not only were they recruiting nobilities, the entry requirements were also extremely high. It was said that only geniuses would be accepted!

“Sword techniques are only my hobby, but being a Magus is my lifelong dream!”

A Knight's strength may be great, but it was still comprehensible by Leylin's standards, not exceeding the boundaries. However, the Magi from rumors were able to manipulate the elements, including lightning and thunder. They also attained a great longevity!

A Magus's greatness obviously exceeded the boundaries of a human, and Leylin could not even imagine it.

Furthermore, every Magus is a scholar filled with knowledge. Magi had strict attitudes towards experimenting about the natural world. They tried to study the laws of nature in order to achieve a massive amount of power to use for themselves! This lifestyle was more compatible with Leylin's previous life as a scientist.

“Yes! Even if it is a Grand Knight, they can only be the servant of a Formal Magus. The strength a Magus holds is something that is impossible for us to imagine.....”

George's face turned serious, and spoke the words in a sing-song tone.

“Why is it that no matter what words you say, I get the feeling that they were spoken by a bard.....” Leylin rolled his eyes a little.

“Haha..... The reason I became like this is because my father sent me to court to undergo training for nobles!!” George resumed his previous state.

Suddenly blinking his eyes, he said mischievously: “Leylin, you don't have a fiancée right? Why don't I introduce my sister Molly to you! She is a beauty that is known far and wide.....”

“Scram!”

Under the moonlight, the two youths left the grasslands as they fooled around.

“Goodnight! George!”

“Goodnight! Leylin!”

After Leylin handed the Cross Blade to George and bid him farewell, he returned to the carriage.

The dimly lit carriage had only him inside. The interior of the

carriage let off a very faint odour. The stench was a mixture of rot and sweat. Because of this, many noble youths refused to stay in the carriage any longer than necessary. Once they got to pit stops, they would escape to the grass fields outside like little wild horses coming out to play.

The concept of relationships in this world was very open minded, all the more so for nobility. With the strong perception ability of the A.I Chip, Leylin had discovered many affectionate couples around, which had led him to seek an even further location for him to train.

Using his supervision eyesight to look at the wild battle scene, Leylin's heart burned in rage as this had made him recall the former memories of the spoilt brat.

“Who would have thought! After changing into a youngster's body, even my desires have increased.....” Leylin smiled bitterly.

Calming his emotions, “A.I Chip! Show me my body's statistics!”

[Leylin Farlier. Strength: 1.5, Agility: 1.6, Vitality: 1.4, Status: Healthy]

It had been over a month since he first began practicing the Knight breathing technique. Right now, Leylin's body state had not only caught up to his peers of the same age, but had also surpassed some. Against George, he had concealed his true

strength, which had caused George to gauge his strength wrongly.

“Not bad! I should proceed with today’s cultivation!”

Leylin settled into a good posture, and entered the state of cultivation. This was his homework every day. According to the A.I Chip’s instruction, after training at night, he should cultivate in the breathing technique again to have the best effects.

After 20 odd minutes had passed, Leylin was completely drenched in his perspiration, but the amount of black impurities that had flowed out were clearly less than before.

“Phew!” Leylin opened his eyes and looked at his body. He said in slight exasperation: “The breathing technique’s effect is reducing, which is logical. According to the A.I Chip’s estimation, Farlier House’s breathing technique, even after optimising will completely lose effect by the times I’ve enhanced my body’s statistics to 2. This is the realm of Preparatory Knights. After this, I have I must use my own power, as well as the external stimulations from near death experiences, to attempt exciting the life energy. Only then will I be able to improve again.....”

Thinking up to here, Leylin took out a yellow coloured fruit out from his pocket. There were some black spots on its surface, making it look quite horrifying.

Leylin directly placed it in his mouth, and then picked out a root of a herb, munching them together.

[Beep! The Host's body is slowly recovering from fatigue. It is possible to carry on with another round of the Knight breathing technique!]

The A.I Chip's voice rang.

“That's great!” These herbal concoctions had been created by Leylin over the past month from countless experiments using the A.I chip. It could reduce his fatigue, and increase the number of times he could cultivate in the breathing technique daily.

With the addition of a few more body-strengthening medicine, the quality of Leylin's physical body had improved at an extremely fast pace.

“Again!” Leylin once again entered the state for the breathing technique.

During the past month, the travelling party had already passed several small kingdoms. Eventually, they had completely entered the wilderness.

There were very few people in the wilderness. It was only a desolate stretch of sand, with fresh markings from vicious beasts and horse mounted bandits.

Ever since the travelling party had first entered the area, they

had already encountered danger several times. Although nobody had died, Leylin's sense of crisis had slowly grown stronger. He could not wait to quench his thirst for power.

When the rays of dawn shone brightly, the travelling party once again resumed its journey.

Leylin sat alone in a corner with his arms crossed in front of his chest. The youths around him had all avoided him with disgust, allowing him to have quite a bit of space.

"I don't know what method Bessita used. The people in the carriage are still isolating me. If it were a regular youngster, this would've most likely driven them crazy ages ago! It's just too bad that they met me instead!"

Leylin contentedly stretched his back. He had trained late into the night yesterday, which had made him extremely exhausted. This empty space was sufficient for him to rest for a while.

"However, this world sure is huge; the travelling party has been travelling for half a year, but they still have not reached their destination yet. We haven't seen the ocean yet either....."

As Leylin thought, he entered slumber with half closed eyes.

Ding ling ling!!!

At this time, the travelling party had already stopped. The black

robed man shook the bell in his hands: “Ladies and gentlemen! It is time to get off the carriage to have lunch!”

“It’s that time again?” Leylin opened his eyes. “This kind of lifestyle is really boring!”

After alighting the carriage and receiving his own portion of food, Leylin chewed on a piece of white bread as he walked towards the grassy area beside the camp site.

He had already used up the previously gathered substitute herbs, so he was preparing to restock.

As he walked, he casually observed the surrounding plants. “This is a Jade Root Fruit, there are already files of it in the database. It is useless to me!”

“Mn! Samun Grass, this is a kind of plant that can only be found in the wilderness. It can be harvested!” Leylin plucked a dirty, brown colored stalk of grass. There were extremely sharp thorns on the grass’s sides. Leylin carefully broke the blade in half and used his fingers to dab at the jade coloured liquid that had been constantly flowing out from the grass. An expression of disappointment appeared on his face as he placed his fingers in his mouth.

“I found it, Flowerless Snake Fruit!” Leylin threw the Samun Grass on the ground. As he casually walked over, he noticed, through the corner of his eye, the same yellow coloured fruit that he had eaten yesterday, growing on a shrubbery. His face

expressed happiness.

“Hehe! What’s this I see? Leylin! Should I be saying ‘as expected from a minor noble of the village’? You’re actually eating wild fruits on the roadside? You have really tarnished the reputation of the nobilities.....”

Just after Leylin had plucked the Flowerless Snake Fruit and placed it into his pocket, an annoying voice was heard.

“Is that Ourin?” Leylin raised his head, and saw the murderer who had killed the previous host of this body.

Ourin had fiery red coloured hair, and there were ripped muscles all over his body. His arms were as thick as Leylin’s thighs. He currently had his arms crossed in front of his chest as he smiled mockingly at Leylin.

There were a few nobility youths at his side, which had all coordinated to jest at him.

“A.I Chip! Scan their statistics!”

[Scan Complete! Ouri., Strength: 1.7, Agility: 1.2, Vitality: 1.5, Status: Healthy]

The A.I Chip feedbacked.

Looking at the data in front of his eyes, Ourin's strength wasn't bad. His strength was almost as strong as two adult men. It was no wonder that he had been able to fatally injure the previous Leylin.

As a child of nobility, as long as they are able to endure sufferings and persevere in their training daily, coupled with the breathing technique, it is not strange to achieve such results.

The nobles beside Ourin were not that strong; most of them were below 1. Leylin had even seen a pale faced youth whose stats ranged about 0.5, giving a run for money for the previous Leylin.

Mentally calculating the stats, Ourin's strength did not differ much from his. But his sword technique and moves definitely couldn't rival Leylin's, as he had the help of the A.I Chip.

As for the rest of the youths, they were only there to increase their numbers. The disparity between his stats and theirs was too huge. It would be extremely easy to deal with them, like an adult bullying a child.

"Is there a problem?" Leylin asked, his voice calm.

"You....." Leylin's reaction had obviously exceeded Ourin's expectations. He actually had no fury or fear, and that made him speechless.

"If it was the previous matter regarding Bessita, haven't I already

apologised before? Bessita has also forgiven me.....” Leylin added.

At the same time, his heart began to race; this could be a probe sent out by Bessita. After enduring for a whole month, had she finally been unable to endure any longer?

“That’s right! It’s because of Bessita! She has forgiven you, but I haven’t!” Ourin spoke loudly, his hands tightly clenched into fists.

“Alright! Then what do you want?” Leylin spread out his hands, as if helpless. However, there was a glint of mockery deep in his eyes.

Ourin hadn’t imagined that Leylin would be so submissive, and struggled for a long time before spluttering: “You have to make an oath to never bother Bessita again in the future!”

“Alright!” Leylin agreed immediately, and even placed his right hand on the crest pinned to his chest. The crest had a Cross Blade and a picture of a skylark on it, which was the emblem of the Farlier House!

“With my honour as a member of the Farlier House, I swear that I will never bother Bessita ever again on my own accord!”

Using a family’s reputation to make a vow was the most serious oath a noble could take. Those who had gone back on their words would meet with the disdain of all nobles.

“So! Mister Ourin! Can I leave now?”

Leylin bowed slightly, with perfect noble's etiquette.

“Hold on!” It had not occurred to Ourin that Leylin would show no resistance, and at this point, his eyes contained an avaricious glint: “According to the noble's conduct, you still have to compensate. Hand over all the Magic Crystals that you have!”

“Magic Crystals!” The surrounding onlookers gasped in surprise.

“Magic Crystals?” Leylin repeated. According to his memory, the Magic Crystals were a kind of currency between Magi. They were items of necessity for Magi Acolytes with no credentials to enter the academy.

Leylin did not know the exact amount required to enter an academy, because he did not have even a single Magic Crystal on him. Viscount John had tried several methods to obtain Magic Crystals. However, he was unable to get even one. From this, one could see just how precious Magic Crystals were!

Chapter 7: Extortion

Leylin had been avoiding meaningless fights.

In his opinion, the fun of winning against others couldn't be compared to the fun of enhancing his strength through cultivation.

Moreover, there's no hatred between him and Ourin. He probably even needed to thank him for heavily injuring the original Leylin, which had given him a chance for rebirth.

Leylin was a practical person. To him, face was never more important than reasoning.

Even using the honor of his family to swear wasn't the slightest loss for him. However, Ourin's request after that had touched the bottom line.

“You.....you can't do that! Those black robed lords won't let you off!”

Leylin tightly grabbed onto the sack on his hands with a frantic expression.

“Haha.....why would those black robes barge into our matters? Don't forget, you were beaten half dead by me previously, and no one had paid it any mind.”

Ourin clenched his fist, and clear cracking sounds could be heard from his bones, “If you don’t want me to break your bones one by one, obediently hand the Magic Crystals over!”

As Ouring drew closer, his large frame engulfed Leylin within his shadow.

Leylin observed his surroundings; this location was already quite far from the camp. Around him were only some lackeys that had been brought by Ourin. They were all looking at them as if they were viewing a show.

“Don’t bother looking, no one will come to save you.....”

Ourin grinned.

“Really? That’s best then!” Leylin suddenly laughed.

His silhouette flashed. When Leylin reappeared, he was already behind Ourin, “Perfect, I can take revenge for that day’s incident!”

A fierce kick was thrown out! Carrying intense wind, it kicked into Ourin’s waist area.

Ourin felt an intense force coming from Leylin’s leg, sending his body into the air!

Bang! Ourin fell to the ground, severe pain coming from his waist

which made his eyes turn slightly red, “You dared! You dared! You actually dared to hurt me!”

“You’re dead! I will hang you!”

Ourin ferociously stood up, rays of blood-thirsty and savage light shooting out of his eyes.

“This is the advantage of having a good constitution?” Seeing that the kick that he used fifty percent of his strength for did nothing much to Ourin, Leylin’s pupils shrank.

“Ha!” Ourin waved his fist around like a violent black bear.

Leylin flashed sideways, dodging Ourin’s fist. When Ourin’s fist landed on the small tree behind, it actually left a deep dent. A strength of 1.7 is indeed not a trivial matter.

“Such a heavy punch. Even with my constitution, I can’t withstand more than a few punches.....” Leylin swiftly thought.

“A.I Chip! Simulate the best method to defeat him!”

[Beep! Task established! Starting Assist Mode!]

A voice came from the A.I Chip. Its powerful calculation ability

instantly came up with the best solution.

[Duck! Task Established! Initiating Assist Mode.]

The A.I Chip prompted. Leylin immediately crouched down, dodging the roaring Ourin's tackle.

[A flaw appeared in enemy's defense! Most effective attacking location: Armpit!]

The A.I Chip's voice sounded.

Leylin's figure continuously flashed, dodging Ourin's attacks while also getting closer. "Do you know? Although your strength is powerful, you're not agile enough. This is the disadvantage of your body shape....."

As Leylin could still speak when he's attacking, it showed that he was still holding back.

"This.....is this still the Leylin from before? He.....why has he become so much more powerful?" The surrounding youths all opened their mouths in shock.

Under the everyone's expressions of disbelief, Leylin threw out a

punch! It hit Ourin's armpit with his entire strength. Ourin, who had suffered the attack, fell onto the ground with a pained expression, and couldn't get up for a long time.

Leylin's full strength was at least 1.5, and wasn't very different from Ourin's. Furthermore, the place that he had hit was also the weak spot. Ourin fell onto the ground, his eyes bloodshot as he growled, "You're dead for sure! My family will not let you off!"

"Oh! Really?" Leylin remained indifferent towards Ourin's threat, and even gave Ourin a kick in his lower abdomen. Ourin curled himself up, like a cooked prawn.

Leylin squatted down, looked at Ourin with a face full of smiles, "Since you won't let me off anyways, do you think that it would be better if I just made the first move and killed you?"

At that moment, Leylin's smile at Ourin looked like the devil's.

"He's not joking, he really dares to take action!" Ourin saw the killing intent in Leylin's eyes. Suddenly, he felt as though he was being stared at by a tiger. The anger within his head completely vanished, and was replaced with fear.

"Mister Leylin! Lord Leylin! You can't do that! I.....I have the Dorlan family behind me. If you kill me, you'll get yourself in trouble!"

"Then do you admit your wrongs!" Leylin issued a ridiculing

question.

“I admit my wrongs! I apologize..... sorry!” Under the threat of death, Ourin succumbed quickly.

“Very good, I accept your apology. In addition, according to the law of nobility, I have the rights to request for compensation!”

Leylin said smilingly which gave Ourin a bad feeling.

“As compensation, hand all the Magic Crystals you have with you!” Leylin smilingly said those words of extortion.

“Oh! No! You can’t do this! Do you know how many people have been sacrificed for my family to obtain these Magic Crystals?”

Ourin struggled to protest.

“Sometimes, it’s just a simple multiple choice question in the world. Now, it’s your turn. My dear Ourin, life or Magic Crystals, choose one!”

Leylin didn’t seem to have any reaction to Ourin’s begging. Instead, he stepped on Ourin’s face, gradually increasing the amount of force he exerted.

The boots stepping on Ourin’s face sent his head further and further into the ground, giving a suffocating feeling.

After a few minutes, Leylin released some of the pressure, “So? Have you thought through it properly?”

“Puah!” Ourin inhaled the fresh air in big mouthfuls. His face was now covered with mud and footprints, making him look hilarious.

However, none of the surrounding youths dared to smile.

One of the youths slowly began to retreat, wanting to leave this place.

Leylin picked up a pebble,

[Wind estimation completed! Shooting orbit adjusted!]

Whoosh! The pebble hit the escaping youth’s leg, sending him sprawling on the ground.

“Ourin, see that? Don’t bother waiting for reinforcements..... Furthermore, don’t try to challenge my patience!”

Leylin looked at the surrounding youths. Those who had Leylin’s gaze sweep past them all lowered their heads, their bodies trembling.

“Okay! I can give you the Magic Crystals! But I left them in the carriage! Follow me back to get them!” Ourin said in surrender.

“Magic Crystals are so important. You don’t bring them with you, but leave them at the carriage,? Are you treating me like a fool?”

Such childish lies naturally couldn’t get pass Leylin.

“It seems like you haven’t had enough!” A ray of fierceness flashed across Leylin’s eyes. He grabbed onto Ourin’s arm and suddenly gave it a snap!

Crack!!! Ear piercing sounds of fracture could be heard, followed by Ourin’s miserable scream.

“If you still refuse to speak the truth, I’ll break your other arm!”

“No! No! No! You can’t do this, the black robed lord won’t let you off!” Ourin clutched onto his arm, rolling on the ground.

“Haha.....why would those black robes barge into our matters? Did you forget that I was beaten half dead by you previously, and no one paid any mind to it?”

Leylin coldly smiled, sending Ourin’s words back to him.

“Seems like you’re really yearning for death!” Leylin was just about to go up and take action.

“Wait! Wait! Fine! I’ll give you the Magic Crystals, but you have to swear that you will not take revenge on me anymore!” Ourin shouted with a pale face as he saw Leylin approaching him.

“Okay! I swear with the honor of my Farliar family!” Leylin answered.

Ourin’s face turned green. Struggling to a half seated position on the ground, he took out a golden coloured pouch from his bosom and tossed it at Leylin, “All my Magic Crystals are here!”

Leylin took it and gave it a look. This was a palm sized pouch made of with gold and silver threads. In the center of it was a picture of an eagle and a shield, surrounded by many plants. It appeared to be a family symbol.

Leylin opened the pouch and saw over dozens of black coloured crystals quietly lying there.

[Beep! Discovered an unknown energy source!]

The A.I Chip alerted.

“So? Can it be used?” Leylin had an excited expression on his

face.

[Searching the database.....information insufficient! Method of usage not found!"]

[Alert! Energy source with unknown radiation. Recommendation: The Host's body to strengthen defense!]

“So it’s like this?” Leylin inwardly thought, then turned to Ourin and asked, “Which academy are you going to?”

“Wet.....Wetland Gardens!” Ourin had an ugly expression on his face.

“Wetland Gardens! I’ve heard before that the entry fee is ten Demon Crystals, right?”

“Correct! Where did you hear it from?” Ourin was a little surprised.

Leylin faintly smiled, looking a little mysterious. He have never heard of any Wetland Gardens before, and was only bluffing Ourin, since most of the school fees were basically all in rounded figures. It wasn’t a big deal if he guessed wrongly anyways.

“Okay! I’ll return it to you!” Leylin took out three Magic Crystals from the pouch and tossed the pouch with the Magic Crystals back at Ourin.

“These three Magic Crystals will be my compensation!” Although he could take all the Magic Crystal now, Leylin is still unsure of the attitudes of the black and white robes on this matter. He also doesn’t want to use himself to test out their bottom lines. Thus, he left Ourin the sufficient amount of Magic Crystals for the entry fee. That way, even if they quibbled about it, Leylin had an excuse.

“Tha.....thank you!” Ourin’s facial expression turned a lot better. If he were to lose all of these Magic Crystals and wasn’t unable to enter the academy, he really didn’t know how he’d face his family.

“Rest assured! I won’t take your Magic Crystals!” Leylin raised his head and looked at the surrounding nobles, who all had their hands tightly clenched into fists. Seeing this, Leylin couldn’t help shaking his head.

“Thank you Lord Leylin!” Hearing Leylin’s assurance, the other youths all felt relieved and immediately bowed.

“But! I want to request other compensation!” Leylin looked at a youth, the one that tried to escape but had been knocked down.

“The Cross Blade at your waist looks pretty nice!” Leylin looked at the youth, who looked a little frightened. Leylin then pointed to the Cross Blade at the youth’s waist.

Having heard the hint, the youth hastily replied, “Lord, you can have it!”

“Haha! I won’t hold back then!” Leylin took the Cross Blade from the youth. After gauging its weight, he nodded his head in satisfaction.

As a noble’s sword, the quality of this crossed sword was excellent.

The hilt of the sword was decorated with beautiful flower patterns to prevent it from slipping from the hand. The scabbard was made from the skin of sharks, giving it a luxurious feeling.

Chapter 8: Alliance

“So the method of distinguishing time is very similar to the past!

Leylin thought inwardly to himself as he messed around with the crystal pocket watch in his hand.

The surface of the crystal pocket watch had fine workmanship, with twenty four small frames inside. Each frame represented an hour.

Not only did he extort a weapon from Ourin's lackeys, but also spoils of war worth thousands of gold coin. This pocket watch was contributed by a small fatty.

As for the revenge from their family, the Dorlan family that Ourin belonged to was from the Bourbon Kingdom, which was a few kingdoms away from Count John's territory. Furthermore, the relationships between the two kingdoms were already in a state of hostility.

Not to mention that time it took to become a Magus was at least a few years, and even sending letters back and forth would also take at least a few years.

Leylin only gave it a little thought before throwing the matters between him and Ourin's family to the back of his head.

“This time I've really made a profit! Furthermore, the Magic

Crystals are the currency among Magi, so they are very useful for acolytes!”

Leylin took out a Magic Crystal and flipped it around in his palm. It emitted a steady, cold feeling.

According to the calculation of the A.I Chip, although this Magic Crystal had some slight radiation, the effect it had towards the body seemed to be positive. It could enhance the body’s vitality.

“But! Ever since the news about me defeating Ourin spread, everyone’s attitude towards me has changed. Should I say that this is a world that respects the strong?”

It had already been two days since the previous incident, and the battle results with Ourin had spread among the nobility teenagers.

Especially the scene of him breaking Ourin’s arm while smiling, it had become the nightmare of those teenagers present. When Ourin returned, he immediately hid in his carriage and tended to his injuries. As for those nobility teenagers, they trembled the moment they saw Leylin and quickly ran away.

“Hi! Leylin, do you want to play together?”

A nobility girl from the same carriage came over and asked. She wore nobility attire, wearing something similar to stockings in Leylin’s previous life on her long legs, giving off an alluring charm.

The custom of this world was to respect the strong. Now, Leylin felt that the atmosphere in the carriage was much better, and the others didn't try to go against him either.

Moreover, several other nobility girls also extended invitations to him.

This girl was in the same carriage with him, her name is Lilith.

"Thanks! But, I have friends coming!" Leylin said apologetically.

"Ooh! I must have been interrupting! I'll invite you later on, Jasmine and a few others are also interested in you!"

The long-legged girl tenderly smiled, raised her skirt, and made a noble's greeting, extending a tempting invitation.

"Girls nowadays are really maturing early!"

Leylin bitterly smiled in his heart.

"Haha.....what did I just see? How many times has our young Casanova Leylin been invited by girls?" An exaggerated voice came.

"How can I be compared to you? 'Satin Gold Mane Lion', your great name has spread among the female circles in the entire carriage!" Leylin rolled his eyes.

“Didn’t you want to avoid me so as to not be isolated by everyone, are you no longer afraid of that?” Leylin look at the approaching George.

“You’re the hot topic in the camp now! Many girls have interest towards you. That Lilith earlier wasn’t bad either. I can guarantee you that if you just put your heart into it, you’ll be able to take her down in three days!”

George laughed, “Furthermore, I have to congratulate you on your successful revenge!” With a wave of his hand, a glass bottle drew an arc in the air and was caught by Leylin.

Opening the oaken stopper, a fruity aroma mixed with a tinge of alcohol drifted out, causing Leylin to subconsciously take a deep breath.

“Apple wine! I haven’t drank much of this in these few months!”

“Correct! Furthermore, it’s a speciality from our federation. It wasn’t easy for me to have kept it hidden till now!” George opened the wine bottle in his hand.

“To our Leylin! Cheers!!”

“Cheers!!!” Leylin smiled. Wine bottles knocked onto each other and emitted a clear sound.

“Also, thank you!” Leylin said sincerely.

George had the strength of a Preparatory Knight, and with his leadership status amongst this bunch of nobility youths, if he had taken any slight action earlier on, he could have easily settled Ourin.

However, he cared about Leylin’s emotions, and only helped Leylin increase his strength secretly. Besides that, he had hidden their relationship so that Ourin would provoke Leylin without any second thoughts. Finally, he helped Leylin complete his revenge.

This protected his pride as a noble very well.

From this, Leylin could see his meticulousness and his ability to take care of others’ feelings.

“This is no longer about winning the hearts of people, but about using sincerity to move them. I should say that it’s really worthy of Satin Gold Mane Lion’s Family, leader of the Furze Alliance!” Leylin thought inwardly.

“No need for thanks! We’re all members of the Furze Alliance, how could I have turned a blind eye at you being bullied by those northerners!!!” George laughed, downing all of his apple wine in one gulp.

“Pity! Now that we’re deeper and deeper into the wilderness, we haven’t been passing by any large cities for a long time now. Even

supplies are hard to find!”

George seemed to have recalled the taste of the apple wine and had some regret.

“Right! We’re going to organize a barbeque banquet; it’ll be for our Furze Alliance. Do you want to join?”

George extended an invitation.

“Of course! It’d be my pleasure!” Leylin smiled and responded. With his identity as a noble from the Furze Alliance, he could only join this circle.

At times when one’s strength was still weak, joining circles was also a method to protect one’s safety.

It was deep in the night. The sky was filled with shining stars, pulling a silver veil over the ground.

Inside the camp, groups of young men and girls all sat together, circling the campfire as they laughed and messed around. It was very lively.

After a few months of living together, they had gotten closer to one another.

“Come, Leylin, I’ll introduce the both of you to each other. This

is Yarfuan, Count Normier's descendent!"

"Nice to meet you! I've heard lots about you trashing Ourin!" Yarfuan stretched his hand out as he smiled.

"Nice to meet you!" A genuine smile was drawn on Leylin's face as he shakes Yarfuan's hand.

"These are the sisters, Gwen and Gwylith, they are your admirers!" George led Leylin in a circle around the campfire, introducing him.

"Nice to meet you! Mister Leylin!" The sisters looked exactly the same. They each had a pair of glittering aquamarine eyes, identical voices, and some red blush on their faces.

"Nice to meet you, beautiful ladies! It's an honor to meet you!!!" Leylin placed his hand on his chest and did a noble's greeting.

Seeing the two girls blushing as they ran, George looked like he was about to faint.

"Brat! You're blessed! The two of them seem to be interested in you! They are twins! Twins!" George's hands were dancing around as he said this, with some heartache.

"Okay! I believe that in a time when supplies are starting to decline, you should have another purpose to organizing this banquet, and not just simply to search for lovers!"

Leylin said.

As for his personal needs, he was still able to restrain them. Although he didn't mind letting them out, that also depended on the location.

"It's good that you're able to see this point!" George said. The smiling expression on his face disappeared and was replaced with a leader's presence.

He strode to the center of the area and banged the silver spoon in his hand.

"Ladies and gentlemen! Sorry to bother you for awhile, but please shift your gazes over here!"

George's prestige was still rather high among this group of people. The surrounding crowd all stopped what they were doing and shifted their gazes to the center.

"Firstly! I would like to welcome a new comrade joining us! He's Leylin!!!" George announced in a loud voice, and clapped.

"Pa Pa Pa!!!" An intense, wave-like clapping sound could be heard from the surroundings.

Leylin got up and made a greeting towards the surroundings.

“Okay!” George waved his hand, stopping the clappings and continued, “I set up this small alliance to guarantee that every single Acolyte from our Furze Alliance would safely reach the academy and become a well-respected Lord Magus. And now, fellow comrades, trouble has arisen and it is time for us to work together!”

George’s expression turned a little solemn, and even his tone was grave. Being infected by him, the surrounding atmosphere also became a little quiet. Only George’s voice still echoed in the air.

“We are nearly out of the wilderness and are about to enter the Great Plains of Death. This is the last stage of our journey, and also the most dangerous part!!!”

“Great Plains of Death?” Leylin was surprised, and immediately searched through his original memories.

According to the memories in the A.I Chip, the current continent that Leylin was in was very vast, filled with many kingdoms and without a united name.

Originally, the Furze Alliance that Leylin joined belonged to the southeast corner of the continent. They seemed to be one of the first batches of students. The travelling party had headed North, passing through many dukedoms and kingdoms, and now already reached the north side of the continent.

After passing through the wilderness, there was a long patch of

narrow plains. Opposite the plains was rumored to be an ocean.

And this piece of plains was filled with all sorts of dangers, and had always been a restricted zone for humans! Rumor was that the plains were filled with all sorts of beasts; even the most ferocious bandits didn't dare to enter the plains. Every part of the plains was filled with corpses of mercenaries, adventurers and travelers!!

Right now, the Magus Acolyte-filled travelling party was about to pass through this Great Plains of Death, to the coastline.

“With the protection of the black robed and white robed Lords, we'll definitely be able to pass through it!” A fat boy said as the crowd went into an uproar.

“Correct! With the protection of the Lord Magi and Knights, our possibility of passing through here is rather high! But when those Lords are unable to manage, we will encounter death. It could be me, it could be you, do you want to experience such an outcome?”

George asked.

“Definitely not!!!” The fat boy shouted as his face turned red and sat back down.

“Correct! Our motive is to reach the Magus Academy opposite the ocean, and to become well respected Magi. But the cruel screening will begin now. According to the information that my father obtained, there will be large amounts of death in the Great Plains

of Death in every single Magus travelling party!”

George went on, revealing a small part of cruelty.

“What.....What should be done?” Lots of young men and women went into panic, and they looked at George with ashen faces, hoping that he would have a plan.

Chapter 9: Entering The Plains

“Of course, the reason we formed this alliance was for that purpose!”

George stated loudly.

“We’ve already discussed this with the other traveling parties. We will swap positions with them, so that our Furze Alliance can occupy a few carriages that are close to each other! We’ve also gotten the permission from the black robes!”

“Furthermore, us noble males will take turns being guards to protect the carriages! Of course, this is with the caveat that we are merely assisting the black robe Knights. As for the beautiful ladies, the logistics and cleaning duties will be up to you!”

“As for the weapons, you guys also do not have to worry. We’ve already made our preparations and even got hold of a crossbow!”

George called out his plans.

The youths of the alliance all began to talking amongst themselves, and after some discussion, most were in favour of this plan.

“Okay, we agree!”

As for the position of the captain of the guards, it was inevitable that George would take that position. Striking while the iron was hot, George began to hand out some missions.

The feast continued afterwards, but it was clear to see that most of the enthusiasm in the crowd had long since been lost.

“Originally I had planned on giving you a cross blade, but it seems there is no longer any need now!”

George held up his cup as he walked towards Leylin, pointing at the sword hilt fastened at his waist.

“Is it true that every single time a Magus troop enters the Great Plains, there are many deaths?” Leylin asked.

“Of course, the best case scenario is that only one or two will die, but there have been times where at least ten have perished!” George shrugged his shoulders. “Otherwise why else would I spend so much money and energy in order to establish an alliance that would be dissolved when we reach the coastline?”

“Wherever you plant a seed, there will be some form of profit to be had!” Leylin laughed.

No matter what, as long as everyone grouped together, then their odds of survival would increase. And any of the surviving acolytes would definitely hold some goodwill towards George and his family. As long as one of these acolytes were to become a Magus,

then the returns would be great.

But even if there were no survivors, it wasn't a big loss to him either way right?

“Aside from your swordsmanship, your intelligence has really impressed me!” George's eyes sparkled. “The things I did were all things that my father told me to.”

“Well then, are you willing to help me?” George extended his hand.

“As you wish!” Leylin laughed, linking his hand to George's.

.....

Leylin's reply to George's request wasn't an impulsive one. In fact, he had made this decision after careful deliberation.

With regards to the hidden dangers in the plains, he wasn't very knowledgeable about it. So joining hands by cooperating would be a decent proposal.

Huuuuu

The cold wind descended upon the group and hit them in the face like knife blades. With each breath drawn, Leylin could smell the fragrant smell of grass.

“It’s already been 15 days since we’ve entered the Great Plains of Death!”

Looking back at the carriages, Leylin could see some traces of damage on it, causing him to feel quite gloomy.

The marks on the carriages were three different lines linked into one as if it was created by a single claw.

“The Great Plains of Death have dangers that even normal humans, or even Preparatory Knights would have trouble with!”

After entering the plains, although the black and white robed lords had increased the number of patrols, and for the acolytes to band together, there had still been some casualties.

The marks on the carriages had been caused by a pack of Plain Direwolves. The very moment they had arrived, the carriages had suffered a siege.

Although there hadn’t been any deaths, the pack of Plain Direwolves had nearly pushed over the carriages and damaged it, giving Leylin a deep impression of them.

From that moment onwards, the students didn’t dare to camp outside and all tried to sleep in the carriages! But even with that, there had still been some casualties.

Leylin's face grew dark.

Although the black robed Knights were guarding them, some of the youngsters still needed to go out to take care of their bodily needs. Alas, within the danger filled Great Plains of Death, that meant danger.

One youth had been bitten by a poisonous insect the very moment he stepped off the carriage and died.

“According to the calculations of the A.I Chip, the poison of the insect would corrode the brain within 13 seconds. There was not enough time for medical help, and even the few white robed Magus could only watch the youngster die...”

After that incident, the students would get off the carriage only when absolutely necessary. However, due to the small size of the carriage and the sheer number of people squeezed inside, the smell within was certainly unpleasant.

For the price of helping the black robed knights drive a carriage, Leylin was given the chance to get some fresh air.

Although being on the outside of the carriage seemed to be more dangerous, with the black robed Knight right next to him, it was actually much safer.

As for the carriage driving skill? Leylin only had to listen to the black robed Knight for a short amount of time while the A.I chip

recorded everything.

“It’s getting dark! Everyone gather within the carriages to rest!”

A voice called out from the front, causing every single carriage to stop.

Not only was traveling at night dangerous, but it meant the horses did not have time to rest, which could lead to their deaths, and cause even more troubles.

“Your carriage driving skills are quite good!” The black robed Knight looked at Leylin and spoke softly.

“Thank you for your praise!” Leylin nodded.

Returning to the inside of the carriage, a fierce smell hit his nose the moment he opened the door. Leylin’s eyebrows creased together, but seeing the stupefied looks on the students faces, he could only sigh to himself secretly.

Ever since the first casualty, none of the youths had a happy look, instead, there was a mournful atmosphere. This was another reason why Leylin did not like staying inside the carriage at all.

“Leylin, you’re back!” A small freckled youngster forced out a smile as he greeted him.

“Yeah!” Leylin sat down and looked around before taking a piece of flatbread to gnaw on.

The dry piece of flatbread was chewed up inside his mouth, feeling as if he was chewing on sand. Despite its taste, Leylin managed to swallow the bread with great difficulty, but in doing so, he felt a sudden pain within his throat, prompting him to hurriedly take out his canteen and chug down a large amount of water. After he finally finished the entire piece of bread, he heaved a sigh of relief.

After entering the Great Plains of Death, supplies were hard to come by. Even though the students had some gold coins, there were no merchants around. So in this situation, the gold coins were not much better than mere stones.

“Ley....Leylin, what’s the situation like? Just how many more days until we’re out of this damned plains?”

After Leylin had finished eating, the freckled youth asked him a question.

His words were clearly what everyone wanted to know the answer, and drew everyone’s attention as they turned to look towards Leylin.

“While driving the carriage, I talked with the black robed Knight. We’ve already traveled half the distance, so if everything goes well from here, we’ll reach the coastlines in another half a month.”

“Eh! Good god, there’s still half a month more?! What terrible days these are, I can’t even stand another single day in this place!”

The freckled youth began to pull at his hair as he complained.

“Hey, cheer up, Kassa. As long as you can take these 15 days, then you’ll reach the coastlines. Delicious fruits, fluffy bread, not to mention a comfortable bed and a warm bathroom, all of it is waiting for you!”

Even as a youngster tried to cheer Kassa up, the words seemed to be trying to cheer himself up even more than Kassa.

Dong! Dong!

A rhythmic pattern could be heard as the doors to the carriage opened, revealing George. In his armor and carrying his long sword, George looked like a handsome Knight. “Hey, gentleman! Ladies! Break time is here! If you need to loosen up a bit, just come outside. If you don’t, then please stay inside, after all, the outside is quite dangerous....

The carriage grew restless before a few red faced girls looked at each other in the eye and walked out of the carriage.

Leylin shrugged his shoulders before grabbing his cross blade, “Let’s go!”

As a member of the guards, he needed to protect these ladies.

Even though all he could do was to maintain his vigilance and call out for the black robed Knight to come help them if any trouble arose.

“I...I won’t go down this time!” Kassa spoke out from the side as he shivered.

“Fine then!” Leylin gestured to the rest to follow him out the carriage.

Landing softly on the grass, Leylin couldn’t help but to stretch comfortably outside. A beautiful scenery stretched far beyond what his eye could see. If it weren’t for the amount of danger in here, Leylin would have loved this sight.

“How beautiful!” George spoke out as he watched the setting sun.

“How beautiful indeed, but also dangerous!” Leylin muttered.

“There’s danger everywhere my friend! Sickness, famine, war, the world is filled with dangers like these. To us, this area is a threat to our lives, but to the white robed Magus, this is nothing more than like the garden back home!” George clenched at his sword.

“Are you trying to say that as long as you have strength, then you can obtain both freedom and safety?”

“Exactly! Take a look at Kassa, he has already lost his courage. On

this road to power, he is lacking the spirit to face danger. Even if he were to safely arrive at the Magus Academy, it is unlikely that he can become a Magus. After all, studying magic is a treacherous path that is a hundred times more difficult than this plain!”

George threw a rock far into the plains, “It’s time to protect our beautiful treasures now!”

Seeing George walk away, Leylin had a smile on his face, “Courage? But for those chasing the truth, prudence is also a necessity!”

“A.I Chip! Initialize scanning!” Leylin thought.

Following the order, a three dimensional scenery began to visualize within Leylin’s head, showing off the vicinity of the nearby area.

Within the light blue geographical image, a cluster of white stars. These stars symbolized the students; not a single one of them seemed to be hurt.

As for the black robed Knight, he was a flashing red light. After the A.I Chip’s analysis, it had recognized him as an existence that could threaten his host.

The final few carriages had the white robed Magus within. Leylin didn’t dare to try to use his A.I Chip to scan it in case its energy was detected and cause troubles for him.

Not too long after, every single nearby source of danger appeared within Leylin's mind.

“Even if it's a poisonous insect, they won't be able to escape the A.I Chip's scan! As of right now, this area is safe!”

This was a guarantee that Leylin could make.

Although he was a member of the guard, he would never do anything to put himself in harm's way.

With the A.I Chip, he had firm grasp of everything happening in a 20 li radius, and this would be the biggest guarantee to their safety.

Chapter 10: Direwolf Pack

“Perfect! I’ve used up all the Flowerless Snake Fruits again, and I can take this chance to gather some more. But I’m not sure if the plains even has this type of plant...”

Leylin thought to himself as he gradually walked further from the party.

“A.I. Chip! Check my body’s stats!”

[Beep! Leylin Farlier. Strength: 1.6, Agility: 1.7, Vitality: 1.5, Status: Healthy.]

A.I. Chip transmitted back the information.

“There isn’t much improvement, only around 0.1!” Leylin furrowed his brows, “Ever since everyone started resting in the carriage, I can no longer find a suitable place to cultivate the breathing techniques. Furthermore, the effects of the medicines are decreasing. According to the calculations, the optimized Cross Blade breathing technique should allow me to increase my basic physical stats to 1.9 before hitting the limit. After that, I can only improve after stimulating my inner life energy and becoming a knight...”

Leylin kept watch on the girl from the Furze Alliance from afar, as he also kept an eye out for useful herbs and materials.

After a long time, he finally looked up in disappointment.

“It is as I had feared! The conditions are too different, and the Flowerless Snake Fruits are not able to survive on these grassy plains. I can’t even find any suitable substitute herbs!”

“Hey! Leylin! It’s time to get on the carriage!” George’s loud shout came from the distance.

“Got it!” Wandering afar by himself was not only attention drawing, but also very dangerous. As such, Leylin could only give up on his plan, and return to the horse carriage.

[Warning!!! Warning!!! Dangerous creatures are
approaching!!!]

Just at that moment, the A.I Chip’s mechanical voice sounded out, and red warning words appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes, attracting his attention instantly.

“Quick! Show the map now!”

Leylin’s facial expression did not change, but he hastened his movement, reaching the limits of his body, and his right hand grasped his Cross Blade firmly.

On the virtual map that was projected in front of his eyes, there was a large group of red dots closing in on their group of carriages. The dots were slowly encircling and surrounding them.

[Beep! According to the databanks, these dangerous lifeforms have a 97.8% similarity to Direwolves!]

“Direwolves!” Leylin’s eyes narrowed as he recalled the data that had been collected earlier. “Direwolf: A kind of wolf inhabiting the Great Plains of Death. Savage and cruel, they mostly hunt in packs. Their strength is estimated to be around 2-3, agility around 3-4, and vitality around 3-4.”

“Such strength, they are definitely not creatures that I, a mere Knight-in-Training, can handle!”

Leylin’s footsteps hastened once more, and he rushed towards George, saying in a low tone: “We have company. Trouble is afoot!”

George looked around at the surrounding crowd, and saw that most of the students were still minding their own business. He quickly retrieved his water bottle in order to hide their actions: “What’s the situation?”

“A pack of direwolves! I noticed their tracks!” Leylin said quickly and urgently.

“I got it!” George drank a few gulps of water, then gave out a few simple hand signals.

The youths from their team who had been chosen as escorts were momentarily startled, but they still remembered their predesignated hand signals. Instantly, they all got moving, pushing the younger girls ahead, and whispering into their ears. The entire process was done swiftly and silently. Although some of the other magus apprentices also noticed something was wrong and followed their retreat, most of them were still oblivious.

Sometimes, when danger arose, the only thing you needed to do was to ensure that you ran faster than your companions!!

“Let’s go!” Seeing that most of the members of their alliance had successfully retreated, George and Leylin quickly followed suit.

“Leylin, you’re unexpectedly even good at scouting!” George said in a low voice to Leylin. After all, they had spent quite some time and were familiar with each other, and he knew that Leylin would not lie to him about something like that.

Although the members of the Furze Alliance were quiet and retreating in an orderly manner to refrain from alarming the rest, some of the other acolytes were very discerning, and they quickly joined in the retreat.

Bang Bang!!

A loud piercing gong sounded out, “The Lord Magus’ have sensed danger! All acolytes are to retreat back to the horse carriages!”

One of the black robed men’s voice sounded out, thundering in all the acolytes’ ears.

The acolytes who were resting on the grass were all stunned into silence, before they all swarmed into motion, fleeing crazily for the horse carriages.

“No need for hiding anymore! Let’s run!!” George shouted as he drew his sword.

By now, all the members of the Furze Alliance had been alerted, and were already quite a distance, and the fastest amongst them had already reached the horse carriages.

“Aaawoooooooo!!!”

At this moment, a long and drawn out howl sounded out, filled with ruthless bloodlust.

All around, the wolf howls sounded; since the prey had discovered their stealth attack, they would just charge forth!!!

Streak after streak of black shadowy wolves charged after the fleeing acolytes; they were about 2-3 metres long, and their speeds were such that a shimmering black afterimage followed them.

“A Direwolf pack!” One of the acolytes at the back cried out in despair.

Just as he cried out, a black shadow pounced onto her, the large impact causing this young girl to fall to the ground. In the next instant, the merciless huge jaw filled with sharp teeth bit down viciously, tearing out her throat as she died with a despairing look on her face.

Some of the fleeing acolytes were attracted by the cries, and turned their heads to look, before they cried out in alarm as they witnessed the grisly sight and hastened their pace.

Another young girl whose face was full of tears was running and shouting: “Mummy! Mummy! I want my mummy...!”

“These pitiful youngsters, they are already beginning to lose it?” By now, Leylin had already reached the horse carriages, and could see the entire scene in front of him.

Swoosh Swoosh

Right at this point in time, seven dark shadows dashed out from the horse carriages, each wielding a huge sword the size of a man, which slashed through the air as they charged towards the direwolf pack.

“It’s the black robed knights! They’re attacking!” Leylin thought

to himself.

These direwolves' stats are about 3 each on average, and are very similar to the knights. However, humans have the ability to use weapons, along with their intelligence; furthermore, the knights should have secret skills which can greatly raise their potential and allow them to burst forth with greater power when necessary! If it's one versus one or even one versus three, these direwolves will definitely not be a match for the knights. However, with the current numbers..."

Leylin had a worried look on his face as he looked at the several hundred red dots encircling them. "Previously, even with just nearly a hundred direwolves, they managed to get to the horse carriages, and even damage some of the carriages. With these several hundred direwolves... Perhaps today we will finally see those mysterious Magi show their abilities!"

Psh !! One of the black robed knights waved his immense blade, weaving a bright silver light in the air as he cleaved a direwolf right into two!

"Heh heh!" The knight licked the blood from his lips, looking extremely ferocious: "Come on, my little precious!"

"Thank...Thank you Sir!" The little girl who was saved kept thanking him repeatedly, the tears still on her cheeks. This was the girl who had been calling out for her mother earlier.

"Are you an idiot? Get back now!" The knight's head did not even

turn as he charged forth towards the direwolves.

Only then did the little girl seem to reawaken to the reality of the situation, and ran back to the horse carriage.

“Hurry! Arrange the horse carriages in a circle to use as a defensive formation, the girls should stay behind while the boys, take up your swords and set up a defensive perimeter!”

The black robed knight who remained at the campsite shouted out.

“Alright!” George was the first to shout out a reply, jumping up onto one of the carriages to direct the alliance members.

“It’s time to fight for our lives!” Leylin grasped the Cross Blade in his hands and muttered to himself.

Looking at the scene before him, he noticed that the members of the Furze Alliance had the least losses due to his timely warning; besides a few who had tripped while running and sustained minor injuries, there were no deaths or major injuries.

In contrast, many of the other acolytes had been killed or injured, for example, he had discovered that Ourin’s little party was now missing two youths, while the remaining few had all sustained some form of injuries. It seemed like they had been just lucky enough to escape with their lives.

“Alright! We’ve rescued all the ones who can be rescued!”

Angelo’s body was covered with blood as he returned to the defensive formation, and he immediately saw Leylin, who was grasping a Cross Blade with both hands and was in a battle-ready stance.

“Aren’t you afraid?” the black robed knight asked.

“At this time, being afraid won’t be of any help right?” Leylin replied. His hands tightened around his sword; after all, even in his past life, such a bloody scene was not common.

“Heh heh! These direwolves are cunning and intelligent, as long as we let them know that we’re not an easy target, and that they will sustain many losses to kill us, they will definitely run away!” Angelo said passively.

Although he did not know if the knight was just trying to comfort him, Leylin breathed an obvious sigh of relief.

“Aowuuu!” The few acolytes that had fallen earlier had perished by now, and with the scent of blood in the air, the direwolves went berserk and charged savagely towards the horse carriages.

“Here they come! Everyone be careful! We will try our best to protect you, but there are only so many of us and we will definitely miss some. At that point, you will have to fight for your lives!” Angelo’s loud voice rang out, as he waved his huge sword, standing

in the front lines together with the other knights.

“Kill!” The knights shouted out loud, and Leylin could see a faint light shining around their large swords.

As the huge blade cleaved down, the direwolf charging in front had a hole torn in its chest, causing it to roll back as blood sprayed into the air.

For a time, the dozen or so black figures stood like an immovable fortress, blocking the direwolves.

“We should fight as well! We need to help the knights and reduce their load!” George walked up to Leylin and said.

“Yes, if this continues for long, the knights will grow too exhausted to fight, and all of us will be in trouble!” Leylin nodded in agreement.

Under George’s leadership, all the men took up their swords and followed behind the knights, attacking the ferocious direwolf pack from the side!

“Aowuuu!!” The direwolf howls were unceasing, and Leylin was currently facing a 2 metre long huge direwolf.

As the direwolf continued snarling, Leylin could smell the stench from it.

“A.I Chip! Scan the battlefield and determine the most efficient method of killing!”

[Task established. Begin simulation! Begin Assist Mode!]

A light flashed in front of Leylin’s eyes, and a panoramic, 3D image appeared before him.

The direwolf facing him finally launched an attack, and a gleaming claw specked with blood slashed towards Leylin, bringing along a hot wave of air.

[Host is under attack! Most efficient method of dealing with it: use the Cross Blade to block it with a 50 degree angle to the right, then pierce!]

“Ha!” Leylin shouted out as he circulated the breathing technique, concentrating his strength in his arm muscles as he followed the instructions, sweeping his sword to the right and striking the claw away.

BANG Leylin felt a shock travel up his arm from the immense impact, making him feel as though he had struck a thick piece of metal.

“This direwolf’s strength is much higher than mine, if I keep doing that, I will be exhausted too quickly. I’ll need to finish this fight quickly!”

Chapter 11: Cross Slash

Leylin was shocked by its strength after using his sword to strike away the Direwolf's claw.

The Cross Blade drew a brilliant arc. Immediately afterwards, following the path calculated by the A.I chip, he pierced out towards the Direwolf opposing him.

Piercing Attack!!!

The Cross Blade Technique was a secret technique passed down through the Farlier family, and the key point was to use a powerful centrifugal force to strike at the enemy.

At that moment, Leylin used his waist to exert power. The Cross Blade in his hands whistled as it pierced through the air and slammed towards the Direwolf.

Psh!!!

Leylin felt the Cross Blade pierce through its flesh, and it seemed as though the Cross Blade in his hands was firmly stuck in the Direwolf. The sheer impact from the blow caused him to tremble, and he tried to retract the Cross Blade.

“He!” Leylin yanked his hands backwards. The Cross Blade was pulled out violently, causing fresh blood to gush out wildly!

The Direwolf opposing him screamed miserably. It turned out that Leylin's sword attack earlier had just happened to pierce into the Direwolf's foreleg, its weakness. The Direwolf hopped backwards in retreat, and one claw seemed to have already been rendered useless.

Seeing the Direwolf escaping, Leylin's eyes flashed once, but he didn't pursue it.

"Most of the pressure has been taken on by the black robed Knights. If I run out of the defensive perimeter to chase it, that would be tantamount to me committing suicide. Anyways, an injured Direwolf will not be able to attack us again. It'll probably die after a while, or... end up as its companion's meal!"

"Well done!" George praised loudly from closeby. At this moment, George also had traces of blood on his body. His attack posture was confident and elegant, and it looked as if he was performing rather than killing. However, he still carried an unparalleled level of strength! He was actually going up against two Direwolves and was still not at a disadvantage.

"The secret sword techniques passed down through noble families really aren't ordinary!" Leylin thought casually before he once again directed his gaze towards the Direwolf pack in front of him.

The tragic fighting between man and Direwolf continued on for half an hour. The sun slowly set, and darkness descended upon the grass plains.

At the moment, the eyes of the Direwolves were giving off an aquamarine glow. The entire campground had an eerie feel as it seemed to be surrounded by a crowd of aquamarine eyes.

“Hah... hah” Leylin gasped for breath. He now looked as if he had been fished out of a pool of blood. His face was still covered with it, but he lacked the time to even wipe it off.

Even with the A.I chip allowing him to use the most efficient methods to kill or injure the Direwolves, he still felt heavily drained from the effort.

“If even I’m like this, there’s no need to speak about the other acolytes. Only the black robed Knights still have energy to spare, but even they will probably be unable to last much longer. In this situation, why haven’t the white robe Magi acted yet?”

Leylin glanced over and saw that there was an empty space amidst the female acolytes at the center of the campsite. Three white robed people were sitting there, giving off chilling auras. None of the surrounding acolytes dared to be within three metres of them.

As for the Direwolves surrounding the defensive ring, they had already lost one third of their number. However, the number of defending acolytes at the front line had also greatly decreased; most had been injured and were under the care of the girls behind.

“If I was the Direwolf King, the current losses would be enough

to make me give up! There should be one final wave of vicious attacks remaining!”

Leylin’s sword flickered as it cut at the leg of a Direwolf. At the same time, he took the opportunity to pull out several berries. He tossed them into his mouth and chewed twice before swallowing.

These were the useful plants he had collected along the journey. They could quickly replenish the body’s energy, but he was running out of them.

“Aowuuuuuu!!!” Shrill wolf calls sounded, but this time, they carried a different meaning.

The Direwolf pack became more frenzied as it heard the wolf calls. It charged forward without any regard for their lives.

“It’s here, the final wave!” Leylin’s eyes shifted. He brandished the Cross Blade in his hand as he advanced.

Bang!!! Leylin felt a great force run through his hand, and the Cross Blade almost flew out of his hands.

“The Direwolves before us seem to be two times bigger than the others!” Leylin relaxed the muscles in his numbed arm, “A.I Chip, scan the Direwolves in front of me!”

[Direwolves. Strength: 2.3 Agility: 4.1 Vitality: 3.1.
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Description: In a Direwolf pack, there will always be those whose bodies are significantly larger than those of the same race. These will be chosen to be the bodyguards for the head of the wolves. They usually have greater strength than the others of the same race, and at the same time, undying loyalty to the head of the wolves!]

This was a paragraph that the previous bratty Leylin had read from a random atlas at some point, and it was now retrieved by the A.I Chip.

“How amazing, looks like the head of the Direwolves is also making a big investment this time!” Leylin thought, before going forward to tussle with the huge Direwolves again.

He had been a scientist in the previous world, and had thought that he was no longer hot-blooded. But now, being in this primitive society and killing the Direwolf pack made Leylin feel as if something had aroused in his body, making his blood boil.

“This is unlike the peace in my previous world; these beast-like instincts are needed for a being’s survival!” Leylin realised.

“Haha!! Come!! Come!!” Leylin had already trained the breathing technique passed down in his family to a very profound level. Now, he only needed the enlightenment gained from killing in order to stimulate his Life Force and become a true Knight!

“Kill!!!” Leylin’s eyes had a hint of red to them as he began to

fight madly with the Direwolf.

At this moment in time, he finally let go completely. In every sword stroke, he vented the dread of his death in the previous world and the unease of entering a foreign world.

“Hah!” Leylin’s eyes flashed as he fought the Direwolf, seemingly having comprehended something.

The Cross Blade in his hands hacked downwards, bringing a silver light with it.

As it slashed towards the ground, Leylin’s body twisted, and strength was exerted from his powerful waist muscles. With the great centrifugal force of the Cross Blade, he made another Horizontal Slash!

The Cross Blade itself seemed to be releasing a dim light. The two slashes seemed to fuse together, forming a radiant cross!

Cross Blade Technique Secret Killing Move——Cross Slash!

A Killing Move was something that had the essence of several killing techniques inside, using a profound skill level to raise one’s killing ability.

Although it couldn’t compare to the Knight Secret Skills that increased all stats, Preparatory Knights who possessed a Killing Move could still threaten a True Knight with Life Force!

The Cross Blade viciously slashed the Direwolf's body, and opened a large wound in the shape of a cross. The Direwolf whined as fresh blood sprayed out continuously.

“Now!” Leylin's eyes shone as he charged forward.

Advance! Jump Slash!

The Cross Blade swung past, and the Direwolf's huge head was sent flying!

The surrounding Direwolves jumped in fright, and the attack slowed down. Even the surrounding black robed Knights looked over in shock.

Leylin felt a sense of contentment as he stepped on the giant Direwolf's head, and he couldn't help but roar.

“Huuu..... I've already vented, so it's time to retreat!”

After roaring, Leylin didn't choose to go forward to kill again, but instead turned around to return to the defensive perimeter. This allowed a well-rested defender to take over his position.

“I'm not an idiot. The Killing Move just now was too exhausting, and I've already vented out all the negative emotions in my heart. I should save some strength for self-protection.”

Leylin received a bottle from a girl with trembling hands, and began to drink with big gulps.

By drinking water, he managed to conceal his eyes which were exuding intelligence. “I have killed the highest number of Direwolves besides the black robes. With this, no one can force me to enter the battlefield again. Next, I must maintain my strength, and witness the white robes’ actions at the same time!”

Based on the collected figures, the A.I Chip calculated that there was a 98% chance of a slip up by the black robes. The Direwolf pack would thus break through the perimeter, and casualties would appear among the acolytes. At that point, no matter how much the white robed Magi wanted to stay out of this, they would have to act.

“Aowuuuu!!!” With the non-stop howling from the head Direwolf hidden amidst the Direwolf pack, the Direwolf pack’s charge became more aggressive. The ones that appeared now were the giant bodyguard Direwolves. The throat of the frontmost acolyte was torn out, and he toppled over.

“We can’t wait any longer! Activate your Secret Skills!” The black robe Angelo shouted.

At that moment, the black robes released crackling sounds as their muscles continuously expanded. At first glance, their overgrown muscles made them look like small giants.

“It’s appeared! The Secret Skills of the Knights!” Leylin’s eyes didn’t blink. “A.I Chip, collect data!”

[Beep! Task Established, Data Collection in progress!]

[Knight Secret Skill (Strength Type?): After activation, Vitality, Strength and Defense increase, Agility decreases! In the middle of Data Collection for circulation path of life energy, 43% recorded. Remaining information insufficient, unable to analyse!]

Looking at the screen in front of his eyes, Leylin felt some regret, “I still can’t understand how the Life Force of Knights is activated! But if I have a Knight-level guinea pig to dissect, then I might just be able to understand.....”

As for the black robed Knights who had activated their Secret Skills, not only did their muscle strengths increase, their defenses seemed to have increased as well. The giant bodyguard Direwolves still needed to be avoided, but the Knights used the giant sword to hack at the forehead of the normal Direwolves despite being cut by their claws.

But with the increase in giant bodyguard Direwolves, a Direwolf had finally managed to slip through a gap and charge into the crowd of acolytes.

“Ah! Save me!!” “Daddy!! Mummy!!” “I don’t want to die yet!!!”

The sound of various cries and screams resounded through the air and the campsite turned into utter chaos.

“In the end, they’re just a bunch of thirteen and fourteen year old kids!!” Leylin sighed.

“Aowuuuu!” As if by chain reaction, another giant Direwolf broke through their defenses, landing within the area occupied by the Furze Alliance.

“Leylin! Come and kill it with me!” George’s neck was wrapped up in gauze. It wasn’t known which noble family’s young lady wrapped it. Not only was it thickly wrapped up, it was even knotted in a bow, the sight making Leylin want to laugh out loud.

“No need! Give me the crossbow!”

“This?” George removed the crossbow from his back, and passed it to Leylin, “I’m afraid there’s no use! These mongrels have thick skin and flesh. If you can’t hit their weak points.....Oh! God! Dammit!”

Chapter 12: Taking Action

[Calculation of wind speed and temperature in progress!
Calculation of trajectory complete!]

Following the A.I Chip's calculated trajectory, Leylin pulled the trigger of the crossbow.

“Whoosh!!!” The powerful crossbow bolt flew out, and the strong recoil caused Leylin's arm to feel slightly numb.

“Pu!!!” The crossbow arrow entered through the left eye of the Direwolf, and exited out of its right eye. The Direwolf howled twice, crumpling to the floor.

“The advantage I have with the A.I Chip in this kind of high-accuracy work is really too great! A crossbow isn't like a bow; all you have to do is aim and pull the trigger. It's so convenient!”

Leylin compared the differences between him swinging around the Cross Blade before, and using the crossbow. “It looks like I'm more suited towards long distance attacks. This is also much safer. It's just that I still have no idea how to activate the Life Force of Knights. Could it be that experiencing a really tough battle is required?”

Leylin hadn't used a crossbow earlier. The first reason for this was to vent. The second was to make an attempt at activating the

Life Force of Knights. Unfortunately, he possessed the A.I Chip as one of his cards, and had never been forced into a desperate life or death situation. Naturally, he was unable to experience the feeling of the Life Force that was activated in a desperate situation.

“Leylin! Good job!” George only responded now, and he patted Leylin on the shoulder.

“From today onwards, this crossbow is yours!”

“Thanks then!” Leylin smiled. Even if George hadn’t said anything, he would still have tried to obtain the crossbow.

“Oh!!! Leylin! Leylin has killed Direwolves, lord Leylin! Lord Leylin! Quickly save us!”

At this point, more Direwolves charged into the campsite, and students cried out towards Leylin.

With the benefit of George’s prior preparations, the losses on their side had been the least. With George and Leylin, these two experts who were Preparatory Knights, it was considered the safest place apart from the area around the white robes.

“Hu!!!” Ourin sucked in huge breaths as he used a sword to block a Direwolf that was leaping forward. A huge force was transmitted over, causing the Cross Blade in his hands to fly away.

“I am the successor of my house! I still haven’t enjoyed a lot of

things! How could I die here?”

Ourin roared. Of his surrounding comrades two had already died. Among the remaining people, if they weren't dead, then they had already escaped.

At this moment, shouts of “Lord Leylin!” could be heard, causing his eyes to shine.

“That's right! The Furze Alliance still has strength, and Leylin was so impressive just now. He can definitely save me!”

Ourin didn't hesitate anymore and began to run in that direction.

“Leylin!!! Lord Leylin!!! Save me!!!”

“Well!” Leylin readied the crossbow, hearing the sound and taking a look, “It's Ourin after all!”

The current Ourin looked embarrassing. Not only had the Cross Blade been dropped, his whole body carried wounds and he was being closely pursued by a Direwolf.

“It's a pity! You've looked for the wrong person! Did you really think I would be so magnanimous?” Leylin's mouth formed a grin.

“With the white robed Magi here, I don't dare to take my chances and secretly kill someone! But if it's only not being able to save

them in time, no one will have a reason to find trouble over that!”

Leylin looked at Ourin, showing a brilliant smile.

“He’ll save me! Definitely!!!” Ourin saw Leylin’s smile, and his heart relaxed. He continuously encouraged himself, increasing his running speed.

“Ohhhh!!!! Noooo!!!!” At that moment, Ourin despairingly saw Leylin shoot the crossbow, dealing with a Direwolf on another side.

“How could you, how could you do this???” Ourin’s mind went blank for a moment and he tripped on a rock, falling onto the ground.

The Direwolf behind him shot forward. Its teeth bit down and blood began to flow nonstop.....

“Thanks!!” On the other side, the girl saved by Leylin ran to him to thank him, “Thank you!”

“No need for thanks!” Leylin smiled. On the other side, Lilith looked at Leylin with her face red and lowered her head.

There was a whistling sound, and George looked at Lilith, directing a ‘you understand’ gaze towards Leylin.

“The situation is already like this, but your personality hasn’t changed, George!”

“Even if I fall into the abyss of death, you can’t stop the yearning I have for beautiful romances!” George used the tone of a martyr, speaking as if he was unafraid of death.

“You won’t die, the white robes are about to make their move!” Leylin rolled his eyes.

Even though the field was in chaos, the giant Direwolves seemed to have an amazing sixth sense. They had never bothered the three white robed Magi, forming a strange circle.

And amidst the noise, Leylin could still use the five senses that were strengthened by the A.I Chip to catch the conversation between the white robed Magi. Perhaps they themselves had not even concealed it.

“Crow! Are we still not making our move? The Acolytes have too many casualties, and that will lower our rating!” A woman’s voice sounded.

“Relax! Relax! I’ve been counting. Up until now, ten have died so far. The limit hasn’t been passed yet!”

A slightly cynical voice travelled over; it was a man’s voice.

“But it’s still reaching the limit, act quickly. I still need to

determine the stability model for this technique! Dammit! The negative energy here is simply too high. It's simply impossible to complete the construction of the 'Tokerwuree!'"

"Then I'll do it!" The white robed man who hadn't spoken before stood up.

"These mysterious Magi! The mysterious people rumored to be able to manipulate the forces of nature!" Leylin's eyes stared at the white robed man.

"All of you stupid and lowly beasts, you actually dare to bother the rest of the venerated lord Magi! Only death can be your eternal home!"

"Mazzerda —Karachi!"

With the chanting sounds of the white robed man, Leylin's ears heard the A.I Chip madly sounding out.

[ALERT!!! ALERT!!! Discovered radiation source!!! Discovered negative energy field!!! Suggestion for Host to immediately evacuate far away!]

The bright red words were so obvious, but Leylin wasn't frightened into retreating at all. He only repeatedly recalled the chanting of the white robed man.

“This doesn’t seem to be the language used on the continent, but an ancient one instead. It seems like quite the tongue twister, do Magi use this kind of language to chant?”

And as the white robed man stood up, the surrounding Direwolves retreated, as if they had met some kind of natural enemy.

“Secondary Energy Fireball!”

After the chant was completed, a floating fireball appeared in the man’s hand out of nowhere. According to the calculations of Leylin’s A.I Chip, this fireball was at least one thousand degrees, and was actually causing the surrounding space to distort faintly.

The fireball left a blazing trail, and landed on the Direwolf’s heart.

Boom!!!!

“Not good! Quickly crouch down!” Leylin shouted loudly. Unfortunately, it was already too late. It didn’t matter whether it was the acolytes or the Direwolves in the surroundings, everyone was sent toppling over.

A loud explosion resounded, bringing with it a wave of heat.

“Puff!!! Pui pui!!!” Leylin got up from the ground, hurriedly spitting out the soil and grass in his mouth.

At this moment, he was covered in dirt, and looked like a person who had just crawled out of a muddy pit.

“According to the A.I Chip’s calculations, that area should have been where the head of the Direwolves was positioned, sssss…….” Leylin climbed onto the horse carriage. He looked in the direction of the area attacked by the Magus just now and couldn’t help but suck in a sharp breath.

He could only see that where the fireball landed, there was now an additional pit of fire that was three metres in length and width, and two metres deep. As for the Direwolves in that area, they had already become burnt charcoal.

The Direwolves whimpered, before quickly escaping.

“He has the body of a human, and is able to attack to this extent! This, this is the strength of a Magus?” Leylin looked at the white robed Magus, eyes burning with passion, “The strength of a Magus! I must obtain it!”

“Quickly! Clean up the battlefield!” The white robed man said, ignoring the fervent gazes of the surrounding acolytes. He returned to his original place, where the two other Magi were.

When he passed by Ourin’s corpse, he stopped. He took a small

golden pouch from Ourin's bosom, and placed it into his own bosom.

"This.....seems to be the bag Ourin used to store Magic Crystals!" Leylin pupils shrank.

"Evaluation! Boundary! Magic Crystals!" Leylin's mind raced. "It looks like these Magi received a task, which was why they helped escort us acolytes. It seems there was a death count quota that would've lowered their evaluation and decreased their rewards if they had passed it!"

"And it seems that I had slightly underestimated the value of Magic Crystals before. These white robe Magi let the acolytes die, most likely because they had planned to take away the Magic Crystals of the dead acolytes!"

"Luckily, now that the dead acolytes have reached the danger limit already, we'll be safer from here on!"

After thinking it through clearly, Leylin's face turned ashen, "This is the world of Magi? Logical to the point of cold-bloodedness! Cold to the point of apathy!"

"Everyone, quickly pack up so we can continue our journey. The smell of blood here will attract other predators!"

The black robed Knight Angelo took off the outer clothes that had been torn due to the activation of the Secret Skill. The sweat

on his face flowed nonstop, and he was gasping for air, looking slightly weakened.

Leylin's eyes flashed with light, "It looks like a price needs to be paid to activate the Secret Skill for Knights..."

"Hey! Leylin, look!" Just as Leylin was about to enter the carriage, George snuck over and surreptitiously pointed to the side.

On another black-coloured horse carriage, Bessita was hugging her legs as she sat. Her shoulder had bloody marks on it, and she looked like she had just gone through a crying session.

"Ourin has always been Bessita's number one Flower Guardian. Now that that group is almost completely dead, Bessita's situation isn't looking very good!"

George said next to Leylin's ear, with an expression that implied that Leylin's chance had come.

"I've already lost interest in her! Anyway, we're in such danger, can't you control your lower half a little?"

Leylin didn't really know what to say. He pointed to George's collar, and on those clothes were marks from a girl's lipstick. He really didn't know when this beast had been able to fool around.

"Hehe....my brother, it's only in this kind of dangerous moment that we Preparatory Knights can show our might! And girls will

always show goodwill towards the man who saved them. This is the most basic of techniques!”

George took out something that was similar to a handkerchief from his bosom, smugly showing his harvest. “Can you see? Just today, I’ve already won the goodwill of three ladies.....”

“Yeah....” Leylin had nothing to say.

When thinking of his playboy past, “It seems that the previous Leylin always used force when he met a girl he liked, seriously.....”

“Alright, it’s time to set off!” Leylin saw the black robed Knights gather the acolyte corpses together. They took out several Magic Crystals and passed them to the white robed Magi, before hurriedly changing the topic.

Chapter 13: Arrival

“The Death Prairie is indeed a place no ordinary person can cross!”

Leylin sat in the carriage as his body constantly jolted up and down. The tiny window opened as a golden ray of sunshine peeked in, giving the interior of the carriage a trace of liveliness.

It had already been over ten days since the attack of the Plains Direwolves pack. During these ten days, the travelling party encountered an increasing amount of danger as they ventured deeper into the plains.

Only now did Leylin find out that the Plains' Direwolves were merely at the bottom of the food chain. There were still many more cunning and vicious predators above them.

On the way, Leylin saw several animal colonies whose numbers were not inferior to that of the Direwolf pack from before.

Besides the Plains' Direwolves, there were flocks of huge black birds that were several meters tall and even enormous monsters, dozens of meters long, which looked like sabre-tooth tigers, except their bodies were like tiny mountains. Just their aura alone caused Leylin to feel suffocated.

Fortunately, the deaths of the apprentices seemed to have reached the limit and the white robed Magi had started to act. Not only did they set up magical defensive arrays on the carriages, they

also directly stepped forward to disperse the animal groups that attacked. Through these measures, a large number of casualties was prevented.

The most dangerous time was when they confronted the monster that was dozens of meters long.

Thankfully, that small mountain-like monster seemed to possess some intelligence and knew that the white robed Magi were not to be trifled with. It quickly left after a short confrontation and did not unleash any attacks, causing everyone in the travelling party to sigh in relief.

“It’s time!” Leylin took out his pocket watch and looked at the clock hand. It had already reached the 3 o’clock position.

He stood up and opened the front door of the carriage. A moist breeze blew towards him, bringing a salty smell with it. It smelt very fresh and clean and Leylin could not help but deeply breath in a few times before seating himself besides Angelo.

“Good afternoon! Sir Angelo!”

“Good afternoon! Such a courteous noble gentleman!” Angelo did not turn as he directly handed over the horsewhip and reins to Leylin, “Good timing, I need to rest for a while!”

Leylin chuckled as he received the horsewhip and skilfully urged on the carriage.

Angelo leaned to one side as he unclasped a bottle at his waist. When he opened it, a strong alcohol smell floated out, and as he lowered his head to take a gulp, his eyes narrowed in joy.

“We are about to reach our destination. Based on the fact that you’ve helped me drive the carriage for a month, I can answer two of your questions!”

Leylin was just enjoying the view on both sides when he heard Angelo’s voice sound out.

“Alright!” Leylin lightly smiled. He had specially tried to get into Angelo’s good books and this was one of the reasons why he had done so.

“Then my first question is, what will there be at our destination?”

“Some temporary tents set up by the various magus academies. Over there, all of you can freely choose an academy to join based on your interests and also undergo an even more accurate aptitude test!”

Angelo looked a little impatient as he answered, “These things will be explained by the great Magi when we arrive, don’t waste your opportunity!”

“An accurate aptitude test?” Leylin was stunned. Soon after, he

recalled that they had only managed to identify his talent in magic initially before being sent onto the carriage by the viscount. As for how good his talent was in comparison to others, he did not have the slightest inkling.

“Temporary tents set up by the magus academies? Looks like this is similar to the school recruitments of my previous world. I wonder what the requirements are.” Leylin silently thought to himself.

“Alright then! My second question! In your heart, what is a Magus!”

Leylin asked his second question.

“A Magus? They control enormous power and pursue the truth, with equivalent exchange as their doctrine. Brat, don’t daydream of obtaining any free benefits from a Magus, or else the flames of desire will gush out from the abyss and punish your soul!”

Angelo’s face twitched as if he had thought of an unfortunate event, while his voice became extremely low.

“Pursuit of truth, equivalent exchange? I like it!” The corners of Leylin’s mouth formed a smile.

After answering, Angelo seemed to have lost all interest in talking. He ferociously chugged down two mouthfuls of the potent alcohol as he lowered his head and closed his eyes. Ten minutes

later, the sounds of snoring could be heard.

Leylin dully gazed at the scenery to his front. Although the plains were very beautiful, after a whole month of looking at the same things, he now felt like throwing up at the sight of it.

“This is.....”

As the carriage continued to advance, the green in the distance became less and less. In place of it was a vast blue, and wave after wave of strong winds.

“We’ve finally arrived, the Death Beach!”

The sleeping Angelo opened his eyes and looked at Leylin, “We’ve reached our destination!”

As they neared the sea, a small town-like place appeared at the end of his line of sight.

Numerous tents of various shapes and sizes stood together, and they formed a huge camp. Surrounding them were dozens of carriages similar to the one Leylin was driving.

And what numbered the most were acolytes of similar ages as them, around thirteen to fourteen years old, each and every one of them carrying looks of curiosity on their faces. Leylin did a rough estimate, and counted that there were at least hundreds of them, filling up the entire camp. From time to time, some acolytes

walked out from the tents, many different expressions adorning their faces.

“Alright! Ladies and gentlemen! Welcome to the intermediate stop of our travelling destination, the Death Beach! You will all decide on your future academy here, and then return back to your respective academies with your teachers to practice magic!”

The horse carriaged halted, and three white robes came out and gathered the acolytes, then the leader Crow began speaking.

“Now, follow me into the campgrounds, and choose an academy. Remember, you may check on all the various academies, but once you have signed a contract to join one, you must not renege! Anyone who disobeys will be hung to death at the gate of the camp!”

Crow’s frosty words made the acolytes hearts turn cold.

“Haha! Crow! You guys are pretty late today!” A voice sounded, and a fatty walked out from the camp grounds. He too was wearing a white robe, and he greeted: “Don’t scare these adorable newbies!”

“There were some difficulties along the way!” Crow explained.

“Alright! Newbies! Now follow me into the camp!” Fatty spoke with Crow and the others for a while more, then turned his head and shouted to Leylin and the rest.

“You guys can call me Jevon, of the beautiful Ennea Ivory Ring Tower. Trust me, if you are to choose an academy, the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower is definitely your best choice!”

Jevon said, as he brought the acolytes into the camp.

Once they entered, various sounds travelled into their ears, reminding Leylin of the marketplaces in his previous world. As for Crow and the other two white robes, they seemed to have something else to do, and they soon left the group.

The surroundings were bustling with activity, mostly due to acolytes just like them. Some of them had gathered in a circle, while there were others who were entering or exiting the tents.

Jevon brought Leylin and the rest, a total of 40 odd people, into the middle of the camp grounds.

Here, was a large tent of pure white colour, and there were still strange flower patterns on the outside of it. They seemed like both ornaments, and yet resembled writing as well.

Leylin could not help but look at it closely, “A.I Chip! Begin Scan!”

[Beep! Forming Image!]

The A.I Chip sent the information, but in the constructed image, there was nothing on the white tent, as if the pattern had never existed before.

“How could this be?” Leylin stared at the tent once again with disbelief.

With every passing minute and second, the patterns on the tent seemed lifelike, constantly twisting itself.

“Hehe!” “Haha!” “Ji ji!”

Various noises travelled to Leylin’s ears. The surrounding lights seemed to distort itself, and Leylin looked at his own hands. At this point, his arm seemed to have been pulled into a long shape, which looked extremely slender.

“Leylin! Leylin! What’s wrong with you?” At this point, there was a pat on Leylin’s shoulder.

Leylin’s whole body suddenly quivered, and he came to his senses. Looking at the surroundings, the acolytes were still listening to Fatty Jevon’s speech, and everything seemed to revert back to its normal state.

“Could it be that it wasn’t an illusion earlier?” Leylin got scared, “A.I Chip, reproduce the situation I was in earlier!”

[Beep!]

A pale blue light display appeared, and the series of images earlier appeared continuously in front of Leylin's eyes,

[An anomaly in the cerebral vessel, an immediate inspection is proposed!]

[An anomaly is found in the Host's condition! Staying away is advised!]

[The Host body has returned to normal!]

Numerous lines of data kept emerging, which let Leylin know that it was not an illusion earlier.

“Phew.....Magi, are they always this mysterious?” Leylin wiped his cold sweat off, still carrying a lingering fear of the events earlier.

“Leylin! Your complexion is really bad! Could it be that you have fallen ill?” George asked from the side.

“No matter who, their expressions won’t be any better if they had experienced that earlier!”

“Not.....Nothing.....Where did Jevon stop at?” Leylin hurriedly digressed.

“Oh! We need to fill in a form, and take the aptitude test! And then it will be free time, and we can choose our academy autonomously!”

“Because you guys have come a day late, you only have a day’s worth of time left, and in this span of period, you must choose an academy where you will practice magic in, if not you will have to wait until next year!” Jevon was still speaking loudly ahead of them.

Now, all of you line up and take the form from me one by one, and then enter for the test!”

Jevon sat behind a white table, and took out a stack of forms and placed them down.

The line moved forward quickly, and very soon it was Leylin’s turn.

“Fill in your particulars in this form, and then enter the tent and follow the instructions of the person inside!”

Leylin took the form, and realised that it was made of sheepskin paper. The particulars required were minimal, only a name, age and location born, as well as a few others.

Picking up the goose feather pen on the table, Leylin filled in the form very quickly.

The faint, red coloured, inked flower patterns on the sheepskin seemed to be very beautiful.

“I never thought that this brat’s handwriting from the mainland is still pretty good!” After Leylin finished writing, he picked up the sheepskin paper and entered the white tent.

“Come over!” An ancient voice sounded.

It was very spacious inside the tent, and there was only a white haired old lady sitting on a black chair and a crystal ball which rested on a table.

“Okay! Why would I suddenly think of those divination witches!”

“Hello!” Leylin greeted the witch.

“Bring the form here!” Clearly, this witch was not having any of it, and her voice was still frosty cold.

“Leylin huh? Place your hands on the crystal ball!”

Chapter 14: Aptitude Test

Leylin followed the witch's instructions and placed both of his hands on the crystal ball.

Icy cold! Vibrations!

A strange tactile feeling was transmitted from the tip of his fingers.

Leylin's head hurt, as if there was a glass rod stirring inside.

Along with the start of his headache, the crystal ball in front of Leylin also emitted a faint glow.

"Very good! Don't let go! The witch stared attentively at the crystal ball.

As the pain increased, the crystal ball in Leylin's hands also grew brighter, "No! No more!"

Leylin clenched his teeth, and the pain that practically split his brain into two caused him to loosen his grip uncontrollably.

"Okay! So you are at this level?" The witch nodded her head. She took out a goose feather pen and scribbled on Leylin's form.

"We have categorised the aptitude of the acolytes into five

grades, with the first grade as the worst and the fifth grade as the best. You are at the third grade, a middle ranked grade!!!”

The witch said as she turned a ring on her hand and made a strange mark on the sheepskin, which had been shining brightly with light.

“My examination here is over, you go on behind me! Next!!!”

Seeing a young girl with freckles entering the tent, Leylin took the sheepskin paper, stood up and gave his thanks, and then lifted the hanging curtain of the tent, heading to the next procedure in line.

The area was still as spacious as the one earlier, and in the middle, there was a white bearded old geezer.

“From the layout of this tent, there should only be two tests. It is really simple!” Leylin thought, as he sat in front of the old geezer and handed the form over to him.

“Third Grade? Not too bad!” The white bearded old geezer stroked his chin, “Alright! Now to test for elemental affinity!”

The old geezer knocked on the tabletop and it split open, and a black basin rose from the centre.

This water basin was not smooth. It seemed to be made of stone, and there was a kind of liquid metal flowing inside that resembled

mercury.

“Carefully look into the water!” The old geezer’s voice sounded, seemingly carrying an authoritative tone.

Leylin could not help but to divert all his attention towards the centre of the water basin. With his constant focus, the mercury in the middle swirled continuously and turned into a whirlpool, as if a mouth had opened at the bottom.

“Now, tell me, what do you see?”

Leylin’s eyes were a little glazed over, “Shadows, and a black coloured whirlpool! And there are red spots near the outer circumference!”

“Anything else?”

“There are also green specks of light in the surrounding area!”

“Is there a lot of green?”

“Not at all! Very little!”

“Okay!” The old geezer snapped his fingers, and Leylin suddenly came back to his senses, “What happened to me!”

“Your test is already over! In the aspect of elemental affinities, you have the highest affinity with the Shadow and Dark elements, after that is the Fire element, and you also have a smidgen of affinity with the Plant element!”

As the old geezer spoke, he rapidly filled in the form and added his handprint.

“Let me give you some advice! Magi are able to use every kind of energy! But only by following the path you have the highest affinity with, can you progress the furthest!”

The old geezer handed the form back to Leylin, “Alright! Your test is over. Walk out from the back entrance and start choosing your academy!”

Leylin bowed, and then left the tent.

As he lifted the canopy at the back, a ray of sunlight came shining down.

“A.I Chip, reproduce the state I was in earlier!”

[.....An unknown interference has caused the host to enter a state of hypnosis!]

“As expected!” Leylin’s face darkened, and then he exhaled

helplessly, “Thankfully, the other party does not have any bad intentions, if not.....”

Deep in his heart, his thirst for power only grew more intense.

“Hey! Leylin!” George’s voice rang beside his ears, “You finished your aptitude test too?”

George’s voice travelled over.

“Yeah!” Leylin nodded his head and waved the sheepskin paper form in his hands.

“I have completed it too, hehe! I, this young master, am a genius with a fourth grade aptitude!” George laughed loudly, wearing an excessively smug expression!

“I am not too familiar with the grading of acolytes, could you explain it in detail for me?” Leylin asked.

George’s family was much greater than Viscount Farlier’s family, and he was able to know more secrets regarding the Magi.

“Of course! This is all common knowledge. No matter which academy you enter, there will be people who will tell you.” George said.

“The aptitudes of the acolytes are ranked according to the chance

of being promoted to a proper Magus, and they are categorised into 5 grades! And the fifth grade is the highest, with a 90 percent chance of becoming a Magus!”

“The fourth grade is slightly inferior, but there is still a 50 percent chance! I, this young master, am a genius at this level! Haha.....My father will definitely be elated!” George digressed, he was clearly too excited.

“And the rest? Hurry and say it!” Leylin punched George’s shoulder and finally brought George back on track.

“Oh? Earlier I mentioned up to the fourth grade. What’s below it is the third grade, where there is a ten percent chance of becoming a Magus. As for the second grade, there is only a 2 to 3 percent chance, and the first grade is the worst, with only a 1 percent or even 0.1 percent chance.”

“Anyway, there is only a chance for third grade and above. As for the first and second grade, basically, they can only be an acolyte their whole life!”

“So that is the case. It seems like my grade is middle ranked. There should be no academy that will reject me, nor would they regard me as important!” Leylin analysed his current situation.

“How about elemental affinity?” Leylin continued asking.

“Elemental affinity is the future path of a Magus, you know,

some Magi can manipulate lightning, some Magi can manipulate fire, and some others can even manipulate frost! These are all paths of choice.”

“Although a Magus is able to use any type of elemental spell in theory, the ones with the highest affinity will not only let the casting speed be faster, but also contain more power. If a Fire element Magus wanted to cast a water-based spell, not only would he consume more spiritual energy, but the might of the spell would also weaken greatly. There could be a water-based pool summoning that ends up as only a water ball!”

“All in all, the elemental affinity will determine the path of a Magus, and the aptitude will determine how far a Magus can walk on that path!”

George concluded.

“The last sentence makes perfect sense, but it doesn’t seem to be yours!” Leylin repeated the words of the last sentence.

“He he! You found out. These are the words of a travelling Magus! I saw them in my father’s study room.” George said embarrassedly, as he scratched his head.

“Oh right! I finally managed to inquire as to why the black robed Knights were so cold and distant!”

George seemed to have remembered something, and was itching

to share the news.

“The strength of a Magus, even if he is only an acolyte, is not something a Knight can withstand, so don’t you think that the black robes’ performance when we journeyed was a little strange?”

“There is indeed something strange about it!” Leylin nodded his head and asked with a conjecture, “Could it be that they have some background?”

“No! No! No!” George shook his head, “My dear brother, you are guessing in the completely wrong direction; these black robed Knights are actually one of the experiments of a Magus!!”

“An experiment!!!” Leylin’s eyes widened. In his world, conducting a live experiment had always been a taboo for science, and even if there were any, they were done in secrecy. But here, they had actually done it so openly and aboveboard.

“In the process of the experiment, this batch of experiment samples had already sustained an overdose of radiation and would not live more than several years. That was why they were used as disposables, to escort acolytes like us!”

“This was the reason?” Leylin thought of Angelo’s pale face, and silently nodded his head.

Earlier, the A.I Chip had scanned and detected traces of radiation, but the radiation discovered on the white robe Magi

were a hundred times more concentrated, so Leylin naturally thought that there was no effect.

“For us Magi, we will be acolytes at least; which knight would not want to prostrate themselves and hope that we pick them to serve us in the future. The only ones who will not take us seriously are those who will not live for longer than a few days!”

George said with some regrets. His face was indignant, it seems like, as a heir to a large noble family, he was displeased with the rude manners of the black robes from before.

“I heard that for the guys from the West, not only had they been treated like young masters by the knights along the journey, they had even slept with some of them!” George’s dissatisfaction only lasted a moment, before it turned into a vulgar expression.

“Slept with some of them?” Leylin was a little more awake, “There are also female knights?”

“Of course, although female knights are generally quite muscular, a few have practiced some unique techniques so they still look pretty good!”

“Also, a female knight’s stamina is rather good and can withstand all kinds of treatment. Especially during intercourse, her pair of toned thighs wrapping around you, that feeling is too wonderful for words!” George’s current character was that of a lecherous swine.

Leylin recalled his memories. The brat of the past was also a playboy, but obviously he could not compete with George who was from such a large noble family, so he had indeed not touched a pretty female knight before.

There were several female knights under the Viscount, but they all had bulging muscles, which made Leylin feel revolted.

Shaking his head, he did not wish to discuss the contents of this matter with George.

“I understand now. Let’s go and choose our academy!”

“This! My father has already chosen for me, I’ll be attending the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower. My family has a relationship with one of the senior Magi inside.....Why don’t you come with me too!” George gave an invitation.

Leylin was a little tempted, but seeing the ring on his neck, he still hesitated,

“Earlier, that Magus never said which academy the ring could help me get into. What if it turns into a restriction instead?”

“No! I wish to walk and look around more!” Leylin declined politely.

“Alright then, I am going to carry out the procedures. You can come to the area for the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower to look for me!”

George waved his hands and squeezed into the crowd.

“Where should I go? I don’t care anymore; let’s check out the academies first!”

Leylin strolled aimlessly around the camp, and saw all sorts of interesting tents with strange shapes and sizes. Some were like a giant mushroom, where a small fan shaped door opened in the middle, and some might very well have used some sort of strange horned devil skull, where the acolytes can walk into the tent through the devil’s ferocious mouth as though they were stepping into a haunted house.

And at the front of all these different buildings were marked with words.

“It is the language of the mainland, that’s still fine!”

Leylin took a look, saw some of the academy names, and memorised them, “Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, Mercifura Academy, Wetland Gardens”.....

Chapter 15: Acolytes

Under the various academy names, there were details such as specialisation areas, and famous Magi, for the acolytes to consider.

“All these are for us to choose an academy according to our elemental affinities!”

Leylin nodded his head, “My elemental affinity with the Shadow and Dark Elements is the highest, Fire is secondary, and lastly the Plant Element is the most negligible unless I want to stay as an acolyte my whole life!”

“And.....” Leylin took down the magus ring that had been hanging around his neck.

“A.I Chip! Scan the patterns on the ring, and compare them with images of the academies I passed by before!”

[Beep! Mission initialising, beginning to scan. Scan complete, comparing with database.....]

[Comparison completed. Similarity level: Abyssal Bone Forest Academy 67.3%, Mercifura Academy 54.4%, Sage Gotham’s Hut 23.1%]

“So these three academies have the highest probabilities?”

Leylin stroked his chin, “From the various introductions of the academies, I remember that Mercifura Academy specialises in the Fire and Plant Elements, as well as the creation of Magic Artifacts. Sage Gotham’s Hut is not known for famous Shadow and Dark Element Magi either.”

“It seems like the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is the best choice? They’re famous for their specialisation in the Dark Element, and is also a pioneer in the research of souls/spirit force?
.”

“But this Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! Why does the name sound like a cult from the previous world?!”

“It seems like a Shadow and Dark Element affinity user like me can never get close to the light!” After thinking for a while, Leylin still decided to take a look no matter what. At the very least, one cannot hinder their progress based on a name alone.

“I remember the recruiting area for the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes; it seems to be on the east side of the camp!”

Leylin walked for about 10 minutes and finally reached a tent that was constructed with numerous white bones. The words on top were arranged to form, “The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy welcomes you!” These big words were all written in red and dripping blood, which scared many of the surrounding acolytes away, and seeing this made Leylin rather speechless.

“Why would they construct such a scary looking scene? To frighten people? They could have at least done it after signing the contract; otherwise all the acolytes will be scared away!”

Leylin shook his head, and walked into the tent of white bones.

As he entered, a cold aura that reeked of blood engulfed Leylin and made his hair stand on ends.

“He he he.....After waiting for long, finally one comes!”

“Where are you? Who is speaking?” Leylin received a shock.

“Excuse me! You are stepping on my hand!” The voice travelling from beneath Leylin’s feet, which made him jump in fright.

Only then did he realise that his shoes were stepping on a withered palm. Leylin hurriedly jumped away, “Sorry, Sir!”

“No worries, but could you move your feet? They are stepping on my right leg now!”

Leylin then realised that the ground inside the tent was uneven and there were many dried bones littered about, and earlier he had unsuspectingly stepped on some.

As Leylin moved backwards, the few dried bones of hands and

legs began to assemble into a skeletal figure.

Taking a closer look, there was a faint layer of skin on top of this skeleton which had covered the bones and on the skull where the eyes were, two green light flickered faintly, which was extremely terrifying.

“I’m sorry! Sir!” Leylin gulped and hurriedly apologised.

“No matter!” The white bony teeth clacked and produced a human voice: “Let me introduce myself, I am a professor of the Shadow and Dark Elements. You can call me Dorotte!”

“My most respected Sir Dorotte, hello!” Leylin bowed once again.

“You coming here, does that mean you wish to enter the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?” The bony white Dorotte conjured a black robe from nowhere and concealed its body within it, which soothed Leylin’s nerves a little.

“Before that, I wish to see the rules set by the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!”

“Alright!” Dorotte took out a dusty sheet of sheepskin paper from behind and handed it over to Leylin.

According to the ancient agreement, after choosing our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, you are receive the right to partake in the basic lessons of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, a set of

elementary meditation techniques, 5 years of residence, lodging, and food free of charge. We also allow you to use Magic Crystals as remuneration, to exchange for knowledge from the professors.....”

Dorotte spoke nonstop while Leylin read rapidly and compared with the information constantly presented by the A.I Chip.

He discovered that what Dorotte said was the exact same as the information on the sheepskin paper. In terms of basic hospitality, it was pretty similar amongst the various academies.

The feedback from the A.I Chip also indicated that although it could not successfully scan the person in front of him, Dorotte had unintentionally released a fluctuating radiation which implied that Dorotte’s strength was above the 3 white robes of the travelling party, and this startled Leylin.

“I have understood the basic terms now, may I know what kind of payment is needed to enter the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?”

“Thirteen Magic Crystals or an item identical in value!” Dorotte said.

“I will use this item to exchange!” Leylin made up his mind, and withdrew the magus ring hung around his neck.

“You seem to have an interesting toy!” The green flame in Dorotte’s eyes flashed.

The bony white hand took the ring and placed it in its palm, and then took out an item similar to a magnifying glass and inspected it.

“Mn.....It is indeed rather interesting, I haven't seen these patterns in a long time!”

“A low grade Magic Artifact! It looks like it was created in our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and there is a carved inscription of a Hastening Spell Formation, but it is broken. It's worth fifteen Magic Crystals!”

“Now! Newbie, are you willing to mortgage this ring for your school fees? Once you have decided, sign the ancient contract of our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” Dorotte said, with an accentuated tone.

“I accept!” Leylin's resolute voice sounded.

“Good! I hereby declare that the contract is formed!” Dorotte said, “Hand over your form to me!”

After receiving Leylin's form, Dorotte laughed, “Shadow and Dark Element affinity, no wonder you chose our academy. In this Death Beach, we are the most outstanding!”

“Since you forked out a greater amount than the fees required, I hereby announce that you have been accepted and won't need an entry test! Take this card! Go back and rest. Tomorrow we will

proceed with our journey back to the school!”

Dorotte took out something that resembled a metal card. Leylin received it and saw that a number ‘9’ was written on it.

“It is over just like this? Don’t we have to sign a contract or something?” Leylin asked casually.

“Ha ha ha.....Never once was there someone who dared to deceive a magus!” Dorotte sniggered, and it gave Long Chen the chills.

“Then I will leave first, Sir!” Leylin bowed and walked out of the tent. He went to the area behind the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy tent.

Behind the recruitment area of these academies, there were rows of wooden huts erected, and in the middle, youths of both genders were walking in and out of them. They seemed to be there as the temporary residence for acolytes.

“Hey! Nice to meet you, are you new here?”

Creak!

The wooden door that was numbered ‘6’ opened, and an acolyte with red hair and blue eyes walked out from it and greeted Leylin.

“Hi! I am Leylin!” Leylin smiled.

“Ha ha! I am Beirut. As for my family background it isn’t very important, since it cannot be used on another continent!” Beirut seemed to be very amiable.

“Come! Let me introduce you!” Beirut headed towards the various fan shaped huts, “Fellows! We have a new companion!”

Several acolytes streamed out from the wooden doors and gathered together. Leylin counted a total of seven or eight people.

“Good afternoon! I am Kaliweir of the Lance Empire, a fourth grade acolyte!” A boy who seemed to have an air of leadership did a self-introduction.

“You seem to be pretty late!” Kaliweir said.

“We met with some troubles along the way, in the Great Plains of Death!” Leylin said ambiguously, not wanting to say much.

“The Great Plains of Death? It is indeed very dangerous!” Kaliweir looked at the acolytes behind him, “Let me introduce them!”

“This is Beirut, whom you have met earlier!”

“This is Hancock, a third grade acolyte!” A largely built

Caucasian guy scratched his head in embarrassment, looking simple and honest.

“This is Raynor, a fourth grade acolyte!” He was a small boy with a skinny build, but there was a tinge of pride in his eyes.

“This is Guricha, a second grade acolyte! And over there are Nyssa and Dodoria, both first grade acolytes!” Although Kaliweir had restrained himself, Leylin could still detect signs of disdain in his words.

First grade acolyte, second grade acolyte, they could basically only be an acolyte their whole lives so one couldn't blame him for shunning them.

“How.....How are you!” Guricha forced a smile and greeting. As for Nyssa and Dodolier, they were both little girls, and some baby fat were still on their cheeks. At this point, they glanced downwards.

“Who is that?” Leylin pursed his lips.

Beside their small circle was a boy dressed in black, his face pale. Standing at the side, he did not seem to fit in with the rest and looked rather arrogant.

“He! He is Jayden! Our genius of this semester, a fifth grade acolyte! Becoming a Magus is only a matter of time! Kaliweir's expression turned sour, and he seemed to have some bitterness in

his words.

“Woah.....a fifth grade acolyte. He has a 90 percent chance of becoming a Magus! No wonder he is so arrogant!” Leylin thought, inhaling a breath of cold air, and couldn’t help but to give Jayden a few more glances.

“Hmph!” As if noticing the crowd looking at him, Jayden silently harrumphed and entered his own wooden hut. This wooden hut obviously had a larger surface area, and the adornments were more exquisite.

“As a fifth grade acolyte, his treatment will be the best Who knows, there might be some professors looking to take him under their wings early!”

Kaliweir face soured even more.

Leylin realised that this group of acolytes was split into a few cliques. The third grade acolytes and fourth grade acolytes were superior to the lower grade acolytes, but rather inferior to Jayden, the fifth grade acolyte.

As for the lowest grade acolytes like Guricha, they all stuck together pitifully and formed a clique. And then there was Jayden, who was segregated away from these two groups.

“Hello everyone! I am Leylin, and my aptitude is.....third grade!” Leylin said.

“Welcome!” Kaliweir revealed a smile on his face, while Guricha and the two girls seemed to have their self-esteem lower as they greeted him and returned back into their huts.

Chapter 16: Chernobyl Islands

“Don’t bother with them, their highest potential will only be that of a third grade acolyte!”

Raynor said with disdain.

“Yeah! That’s right, to acolytes, aptitudes are more important!” Leylin agreed.

Although this group of youths was pretty silent during the forming of their cliques, he naturally did the thing that would benefit him the most.

Amongst the acolytes, Jayden had the capability to be independent, but Leylin did not have such a good aptitude, so he could only join a group. Also, by comparing, naturally it was the group with Kaliweir’s as the head with a better future.

“Haha.....Welcome! Welcome! With your participation, our group is now more robust, there will definitely be a day where I will make that person regret!”

Kaliweir said while clenching his teeth. Afterwards, a few of them arranged to meet after dinner, and they went back to their respective huts.

“Beirut, what did you mean earlier when you said it was a different continent?” Leylin looked for the most amiable, Beirut,

and asked him as he was concerned about what Beirut had said earlier.

“Oh..... This, you know! Actually the continent we’re on is rather small. To the outside world, it is known as the Chernobyl Islands!”

“Island??” Leylin gaped. According to his journey in the past half a year, he could almost be certain that this continent was as huge as the Eurasian Continent he was in from the previous world. But it was only an island here?

“Oh! Sorry! Geography is my weak subject, and it has often made my home tutor shudder in rage!” Leylin explained.

Truth be told, the Farlier Family is only a noble family, and its heritage was pretty short. It couldn’t be compared to the nobles of those huge families, so not knowing was not a rare thing.

“Ha ha!” Hearing Leylin speak, Beirut laughed jovially, “Me too! I have made 5 etiquette tutors leave in rage! In the end, my father offered a monthly salary, but still no one wanted to teach me. This was something my father had specially told me right before I left!”

“Let us continue on the previous topic, we are in the Chernobyl Islands, and the outside world has coined another name for it: The Barren Islands!”

“Barren?” Leylin was a little skeptical, “There are still quite a few

people here and plenty of kingdoms, could it be that it is referring to the lack of certain resources?”

“That’s right! In the Chernobyl Islands, due to the environment here, or some external factors, the land here is unable to produce any of the materials a Magus needs. Apart from the earnest acolytes and Magi in seclusion, there are absolutely no other traces of Magi here on this continent!”

“So that is the case!” Leylin nodded his head, and although there were myths of Magi back in his homeland, only the founder of the Farlier Family has seen a Magus. From this, one can see the rarity of Magi.

“And so, we need to go to the other side of the seas before we can truly find a continent! I heard that not only are there various kinds of resources that Magi need, but there are countless traces of secrets, and remnants of experimental labs. On the whole, the continent has various academies and organisations that trade and exchange the information of magic!”

“On that continent, Magi are not a legend! Although they are still uncommon, even a regular human may be able to see one! Only there can we advance in the progress of our acolyte abilities!” Beirut’s eyes gave off obvious signs of yearning.

“So that is the case! What is the name of that continent then?” Leylin asked.

“I don’t know!” Beirut shook his head, “That continent is too

huge! There was never a unified name for it. As for us, we're going to the north of the continent, and it is known as the Narrow Coastal Regions of the North! Just the North Coastal Regions alone is several times bigger than the Chernobyl Islands that we're on!

“Siii!!” Leylin sucked in a breath of cold air.

“So huge???”

“This world is indeed very vast. The higher one stands, the further one can see! This is a phrase from a bard that I like very much.” Beirut concluded.

“Thank you for your explanation! I think I need some time to digest the information!” Leylin bade his farewells and returned to his own hut.

There was a metal plaque on the yellow wooden door where a “9” was written, and it looked to be rather rusty.

Pushing the door open, an odour of rot and rust invaded his nose.

Leylin uncontrollably sneezed twice.

“It looks like this is just a gathering point, so the accommodations are rather simple!” Besides a bed and chair in the wooden hut, there was practically nothing else.

Leylin found a cloth, wiped down the chair, and then sat on it.

*** Creak! Creak! *** The wooden chair creaked continuously, which made Leylin worry that it would be crushed into pieces in the next moment.

“Lucky it is just for a night! In this condition, it would be better to clean up a little first!”

Leylin pat the dust off his body and walked out of the wooden hut. He had made plans to meet with George and the others, and since he had already chosen his academy now, he should tell them so that they could properly write to each other in the future.

For the batch of acolytes that Leylin was in, they were considered one of the later groups to reach the camp. After Leylin’s batch had chosen their schools, the various tents of the academies seemed to have fewer people visiting them, and it looked to be much quieter.

“Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, it’s here!” Leylin walked to the back of the student quarters, and blocked the path of a familiar girl from the same travelling party.

“Hi Lisa, do you know where George is?” Lisa was a red haired girl who had matured early; one could already see the fine curves on her body.

“Ley..... Leylin!” Lisa blushed, as she had a good impression of Leylin, who had helped several acolytes along the journey a

number of times.

“George is in room 13, I’ll call him for you!” Lisa picked up her skirt, and rapidly ran off.

Whiffing the perfume that was lingering in the air, Leylin’s heart trembled.

“Leylin!” This lecherous thought was very soon broken by a joyous voice.

George had obviously taken a bath and changed his clothes. He had also shaved his mustache, and gave off a very refreshing look.

“Have you finished choosing your academy?” George said loudly, as he patted Leylin’s shoulder.

“Yes I did, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” Leylin replied.

“Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” George touched his chin, “I heard from my female seniors that it seems to be famous for its Shadow and Dark element magic! I hope you won’t piss in your pants because of a skeleton during the night!”

“Female seniors?” Leylin shook his head, and had even more admiration for George’s abilities for seducing women.

“Hehe.....Those who are able to participate in the aptitude test

are all of nobility, and it just so happens that I met a distant cousin, an elder female cousin!” George laughed smugly, as if having earned something.

“As for the skeletons and whatnot, I think we’ll see them not only at night, but even in broad daylight!” Leylin laughed bitterly, as he had signed an acolyte contract with a skeleton not too long ago.

“No matter what, as long as you know the location it’s fine! Let’s keep in contact in the future!” George said seriously, a big change from his smug expression earlier.

“Let’s keep in contact!” Leylin nodded.

“Oh yeah! Do you know where Bessita went to?” George asked suddenly.

“Bessita?” Leylin shook his head.

After the previous attack of the wolves, the vibrant and beautiful girl had been much more silent, but at least she had endured and safely here arrived.

“Yeah! I heard from other companions that her aptitude wasn’t that great, only that of a second grade acolyte, so she entered the Wetland Gardens Academy!

“I know now! Thanks!” Leylin was not too interested in the

affairs of this girl.

Although she was the one the previous Leylin really admired, to him, a girl of thirteen or fourteen years of age was only a child! And the previous encounters were just a child's mischief.

“How is it? Do you feel a little wasteful because you were unable to get her in your hands.....?” George once again changed back to having a lewd expression.

“Scram.....”

After another one to two hours, the sky had already darkened. Leylin was in the camp of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and enjoyed the dinner provided by the academy with the other acolytes.

This time the dinner was extremely sumptuous, and because they were leaving tomorrow, they were generous with the portions.

Various fruit juices and wine, fragrant barbecue chicken, fish sauce, truffles, fruits, and salads had all satisfied the belly of Leylin who had not eaten much ever since he appeared in the grasslands.

The acolytes were eating and drinking within several groups, and Leylin's eyes looked towards the corner and found Professor Dorotte and Jayden standing at a corner. Jayden also spoke a few words to him occasionally.

“Having a fifth grade acolyte in this semester, we are really lucky!”

Beirut tore a huge strip of chicken thigh off the barbecue, and gave it a huge bite.

“Ever since Jayden arrived, Professor Dorotte and him have spoken on a few occasions, I wonder what they are talking about?”

“For acolytes, the aptitude will greatly determine the progress of a Magus. What Professor Dorotte is doing is rather normal. Beirut, eat your barbecue chicken!”

Kaliweir’s voice turned cold, and only after seeing Beirut drink the fruit juice and lowering his head did he turn his gaze back on the barbeque.

“Although the aptitude is important for a Magus, it isn’t everything. Only the accumulation and comprehension of information is the true motivator and key to the rise of the Magi’s powers!”

A third grade acolyte added.

Although it was the truth, the atmosphere in the group darkened as they saw Jayden and the professor chatting away. The group silently ate their delicacies, seemingly having lost their appetites.

“Ha ha..... Guricha, hurry, what happened, what happened

next?”

On the other side, the lower aptitude acolytes sat in a circle with Guricha was in the middle, narrating a risky adventure.

He had eloquence, and was humorous in his speech. Nyssa and Dodoria held their tummies and laughed coquettishly, as if they were two happy skylarks.

Compared to them, this side was pretty silent.

The group looked at each other and craned their necks, listening intently. However, only Kaliweir retained his prideful expression.

Seeing that even the fourth grade acolyte Raynor could not bear to go over and listen and seemed afraid of losing face, Leylin laughed silently.

“After all they are just a bunch of kids!”

After dinner time was over, the group bade their goodbyes and went back to their respective huts.

After today’s simple cleaning, Leylin’s hut was barely accommodative. At least there was not as much dust as before.

Leylin lay on his bed without removing his clothes, and he stared blankly at the ceiling as if he was lost in thought.

“I finally entered an academy! It is also time for the cultivation of Magi to open its doors for me!”

Chapter 17: Dirigible

Clang Clang!!

An alarm sounded, produced by the ringing of a copper plate, waking Leylin up from his deep slumber.

He opened his eyes. A hint of sunlight shone through the window, landing on Leylin's shoes.

"It's already morning?" Leylin got up, hastily washed up, and went outside.

"Good morning!"

"Good morning! Leylin!" Beirut had two dark circles around his eyes and kept yawning.

"The conditions here are the worst! There are actually fleas and fungi on my blanket, my god! I cannot remain here for a moment longer!" Voices of complaint sounded from time to time.

These acolytes were all of noble birth and their daily accommodations had not been lacking, so naturally they were suffering now.

Today, everyone was lacking sleep and had dark circles around their eyes.

Although Leylin could not sleep at the start, he had managed to fall asleep later in the night. Right now his vigor was greater than the others, and he still had an inclination to walk around.

The whole campground seemed to be bustling with activity. There were many who were taking down the tents, and the floors were littered with rubbish.

As Leylin silently walked around, many thoughts crossed his mind. “Every year at this time, there will be batches of acolytes risking their lives to come here and walk on the path of a Magus. And right now, this is just my starting point!”

“Gather around! Gather around! Everyone gather according to your academy, and the respective professors will take charge! Do not wander off!” A white bearded geezer shouted in the centre of the campgrounds.

His voice, however, was extremely piercing to the ears, as he used some kind of magic to make it resound throughout the camp.

“This has a much higher pitch than a trumpet from the previous world!” Leylin rubbed his ears, which felt like they had been trampled on, and hurriedly went towards the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy gathering area.

“Hey! Leylin, you’re back? Kaliweir was looking for you earlier.” Beirut greeted him.

During his short time here, Leylin had only managed to match the various faces with their names, but he had the best relationship with Beirut.

“My apologies! I strayed a little far and had forgotten to keep track of time! Did Kaliweir need something?”

Leylin revealed an apologetic expression.

“It’s nothing! Dorotte asked him to make a head count, so you’ll just have to tell him later. Right now he is being smug about it!” Beirut shook his head.

“Alright! How are we going to leave, by ship?” Leylin looked over at the distant blue seas with boundless horizons, but there were no traces of any ships.

“Not only there are no ships, from a geographical point of view, we are not in a suitable location for a port.” Leylin was filled with suspicion.

“I guess so? However, it might take another half a year to get to another continent!” Beirut scratched his head.

“Transportation in the ancient times is a little too behind in technology, needing around 1 year just to travel to school. Time cannot be wasted just like that; it needs to be used efficiently!”

Leylin touched the 3 Magic Crystals that he had snatched from Ourin, which were in a leather pouch hung around his waist, seemingly deep in thoughts.

“Taking a boat? What naive thinking!” A frosty voice travelled over, bringing ridicule along with it.

“Jayden?” Leylin looked at the approaching black robed student.

“We are close to the Death Seas; any random fish in it is able to kill a Knight! Not to mention enormous beasts, and even ancient creatures, they all loathe the ships of humans and often bring storms and waves to them. So we would just be courting death if we were to take a ship!”

“A fish with the ability to kill a Knight?” Leylin widened his eyes. Right now he was still a preparatory Knight, and if what Jayden said was true, he would die if he were to fall into the sea?

Leylin delved into his subconsciousness and retrieved his body statistics.

[Leylin Farlier. Strength: 1.9, Agility: 1.9, Vitality: 1.9 Status: Healthy]

In the Great Plains of Death, Leylin had analysed the wolves' flesh and had also belatedly discovered that their eyeballs

contained a special component that complemented the Knights' breathing techniques, so he had collected many of those eyeballs.

And with the contribution from these direwolves, Leylin had now reached the limits of a preparatory Knight.

According the analysis of the A.I Chip, when the stats have all reached 2, they have twice the strength of an average adult and is also at the bottleneck of a Preparatory Knight. Only by igniting their internal life energy can they get over this bottleneck.

Clenching his fist tightly, a strong force was controlled within his palms.

“Right now, if I were to hold a cross blade, I have the confidence to fend off against a squad of common soldiers! But even a Knight whose strength is above mine cannot defeat a mere fish in the Death Seas?”

Leylin was a little skeptical of it, “It could be that Jayden has exaggerated things, but the Death Seas containing dangers that even apply to Magi is a fact!”

“A.I Chip! Is is possible to scan the seas nearby?”

[Beep! The radiation surrounding the host body is excessive!
Unable to scan due to interference of an unknown force field!]

The A.I Chip replied.

“Radiation? Unknown force field?” Leylin looked at Dorotte, who wasn’t too far away, and had some understanding.

“In this continent, the Magi population is scarce and there isn’t much interference from radiation, so the A.I Chip is able to scan up to a 20 li radius. But acolytes and Migi professors are present in this camp, which is why the interference is too strong, and hence the A.I Chip has limitations with its scanning abilities!”

“Right now, what is the furthest distance you can scan?” Leylin’s face darkened.

[Beep! Precise scanning range: Within 300 metres radius from the host’s body! Vague scanning range: Within 1000 metres!]

The A.I Chip replied duly.

“Hu.....” Leylin exhaled loudly, “Not too bad! This distance is enough to warn me of dangers! However, after reaching the other continent and the academy, this scanning range will most likely shorten once again!”

[To increase scanning range, please raise the level of the A.I

Chip!]

A message was sent from the A.I Chip.

“I can still level up the A.I Chip?” Leylin was ecstatic.

“Raise level!”

[Beep! The energy required is lacking, please replenish!]

The robotic voice sounded, and brought Leylin down from Heaven into Hell.

“Damn!” The A.I Chip has already disappeared from my original body so how can I retrieve it to replenish energy? Then again, even if I managed to, where am I going to find energy?”

Leylin held his head, and recovered after a while.

“Forget it, since its level is able to rise, I can just find a way in the future. As for now, its current functions are enough for me!”

“What did Jayden say to you guys earlier?” A voice sounded, and brought the absent-minded Leylin back to reality.

When Leylin recovered, he discovered that Jayden had left without him knowing, and Kaliweir was now beside him.

“Him? He just spoke about setting off! I reckon he was bored, after all, not speaking to anyone all day is rather stifling!” Beirut surmised.

“Yeah, that’s true!” Kaliweir nodded his head and then looked at Leylin. “We’re about to set off, don’t go anywhere now. If you were to board the wrong ship, it would be rather troublesome!”

“Ship?” Leylin looked at the surface of the sea, and still didn’t see any signs of a ship.

“Haha!” Kaliweir laughed loudly, “Who said it had to come from the water.”

“Look!”

Following the direction that Kaliweir pointed to, Leylin and Beirut raised their heads and gaped.

On the horizon, 3 massive white ships were slowly floating towards them.

As the ship approached, a massive shadow covered the whole camp, and it seemed as though darkness had descended upon the earth.

“Oh! Look!” “My god!” “How beautiful!”

The other people in the camp had also discovered the abnormalities, and many raised their heads, exclaiming in awe and shock.

“How is it? This is one of the Magus’ mode of transport, a [Dirigible](#)! We will be riding these soon!” Kaliweir said rather smugly.

[(Dirigible) Type of aerostat or lighter-than-air aircraft that can navigate through the air under its own power]

“All these were just told to him by Professor Dorotte, so what is there to be gloating about?” Jayden reappeared out of nowhere, and said blandly.

“Dammit!” Kaliweir stamped his feet.

The 3 Dirigibles constantly got closer and slowly lowered themselves onto the ground outside the camp, under the various cheers of the masses.

“En! They are rather similar to the blimps from my previous world, and each one has a very large aerostat gasbag on top of it, I wonder if they are filled with hydrogen gas?”

Leylin had some experience from his previous world, so he recovered from his astonishment faster than others, and pondered

over the construction of the Dirigibles.

The pure white Dirigibles landed on the ground, and let out thunderous growling noises.

The doors of the Dirigibles then opened, and a few white robed Magi walked out from them. There were also some movements within the camp, a few old geezers also walked out and exchanged words with them.

“Alright! Everyone bring all of your belongings and follow me. Don’t wander off on your own!”

Dorotte had a black cloak on, and the silhouette of his body was concealed within it. He began to gather the students.

The acolytes of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy all scrambled and ran back to their little wooden huts to fetch their belongings.

Leylin brought very few things with him. His belongings only consisted of a water sack, a leather bag, a cross blade hung from his waist, and a crossbow slung over his back.

The acolytes fervently left the campgrounds under the guidance of the professors of their respective academies, and they gathered into individual groups based on their academy.

“Alright! Listen to me! Pay attention to the names mentioned next! Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, Wetland Gardens Academy..... All

of you will board the Dirigible on the right, numbered '332'. Don't miss it! Professors please take note of the number, and acolytes, follow your professors!"

"As for Mercifura Academy, Kerita Academy.....Your Dirigible is in the center, numbered '955'." The voice continued.

"..... Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, Sage Gotham's Hut..... Yours will be the one on the left, number '455', don't mix it up now!"

As Leylin finally heard Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, he could not help but to glance at the Dirigible on the left.

As he approached it, he realised that the Dirigible was simply too enormous. The aerostat gasbag at the top seemed like a gigantic rugby ball, casting its shadow on the ground.

"Acolytes of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, follow me!" Green flames flickered in Dorotte's eye sockets, and behind him were two figures, which seemed to be his servants or subordinates.

Leylin walked in the centre of the group and glanced around.

Under his keen observation, he noticed a few familiar faces from his travelling party. They also noticed him and smiled at him in response, also speaking to some fellows beside them. They all had excitement written across their faces.

At the far right, George waved vigorously when it was his turn to board the Dirigible, and entered the Dirigible.

“From today onwards, the acolytes will all go their separate ways!”

A hint of sadness surfaced in Leylin’s heart, but it was suppressed very quickly.

Chapter 18: Conflict

Very soon it was Abyssal Bone Forest Academy's turn, and Dorotte led the way, stepping through the door first.

The acolytes hurriedly followed. When Leylin put more force in his legs, there was a sturdy reverberation coming from the floor beneath his shoes, as if he was stepping on a limestone floor.

“What a strange material! It looks like wood but it's sturdier, is it some kind of alloy?”

Leylin looked at the greyish, patterned floor and couldn't help but think about it.

“We're here! This section of the corridor, from number '13' to '32', is the area designated for our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, you all can allocate on the rooms on your own. Remember, my number is '14'. Look for me if you need something!”

After he finished talking, Dorotte turned, and his black cloak fluttered as he entered his room with the two servants.

“Alright! Now let me designate the rooms!” Kaliweir stood out and said.

“Hng!” Jayden harrumphed and casually picked a room, number '18', and walked inside.

Kaliweir's face turned red, and then white. He clenched his fist several times, only to put it down. "Good! Jayden chose room 18. Next, Beirut, you will be in room 15, Raynor you're in room 16....."

Jayden left, and the remaining acolytes, Beirut, Raynor, and Leylin, were in the same clique as Kaliweir. As for Guricha and his group, they did not dare to object at all.

Leylin was allocated room 20. He didn't say anything, and hurried into his cabin.

The room was rather small; it was just a partition. There was enough space for a bed, but hardly any room to stand at all.

This reminded Leylin of the beds on the trains in his previous world, which were also as cramped, with barely enough room to stretch his limbs.

"Having a bed is considered good; I was just sleeping in my seat when travelling in the Great Plains of Death!" Leylin comforted himself.

"Ladies and Gentlemen! Welcome to the Dirigible, I am your captain - Kirkwul Kroft Leebar, I wish you all a pleasant journey ahead!"

"There are a few announcements of note. Apart from the Professors, the rest are not allowed to walk on the decks unless you wish to go flying down from the skies!.....The cafeteria is in Hall 1,

and Hall 2 is where the washrooms are. As for Hall 3, it's a lounge; everyone is welcome to go there!"

A low pitched male voice rang throughout the room. Leylin looked around and noticed the sound was coming from a yellow bronze pipe, but did not know if it was an air duct or megaphone.

"We're taking off!" Leylin felt weightless for a moment, and the ship swayed. He hurriedly scrambled towards a window.

This window was only the size of a soccer ball and was very thick, so it was hard to see what was outside.

Following the Dirigible's ascent, the ground became smaller and smaller, and gradually, the camp in Leylin's view turned into a black dot.

Leylin placed his cross blade and crossbow aside, and laid on the bed.

"I heard Professor Dorotte say that the journey will last for roughly a month, what a long period of time! Half a year has already passed since I left my family, but we still have not reached the academy yet!"

Absentmindedly, Leylin shut his eyes.

"Ding.....Ding Dong....."

A melodious note rang, waking Leylin from his sleep. Leylin climbed out of bed and looked outside the window, and was greeted by darkness.

“It is already evening!”

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening!” Right now, the cafeteria is providing dinner. Today’s menu is: Foie gras with truffles roast chicken, white bread, squirrel meat.....”

This time, the pleasant voice was that of a female’s.

Leylin rubbed his stomach and hurriedly stood up. He straightened his clothes and ran towards the cafeteria.

The corridor was rather dim and there was a small lamp every few steps, which produced a yellowish glow.

The surrounding wooden cabin doors opened, and acolytes came streaming out from them.

Right now, Hall 1 was already packed with acolytes but Leylin did not see any of the professors there. He wondered if there was a special room for them.

On the ceiling of the hall was a very large white coloured rock, which emanated a bright white light, just like a miniature sun.

The cafeteria was filled with long tables and white chairs, and it looked a little like a university canteen.

“Hey! Leylin, here!” In a corner, Beirut beckoned to him, sitting with a few other acolytes from the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

“I’m here!” Leylin collected a silver coloured tray and cutlery, and after deliberating, he picked up a slice of white bread, a fried chicken drumstick, fruit salad, and a bottle of apple cider, and sat beside Beirut.

“You guys sure are early!” Leylin greeted them.

“It’s you who’s late, could it be that you overslept?” Beirut said teasingly.

Leylin sat down, and gulped down half a bottle of apple cider, “Yeah, I did oversleep a little!”

Looking around the surroundings again, “Are we also travelling with these acolytes?”

At this moment, besides the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes, the hall was also filled with acolytes from other academies. These boys and girls sat together according to their respective academies and seemed distant towards one another.

“That’s right; we are on the same Dirigible with Sage Gotham’s Hut, and a few other academies! As for Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, they are headed in a completely different direction from us, so we could only go our separate ways!” Raynor explained.

“So it’s like this!” Leylin said with a tinge of regret. “George and the others have all boarded the Dirigible on the right, and it looks like the distance from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is rather far. I think there’ll be some problem with communication next time!”

After eating dinner, the masses returned to their own rooms to rest.

Every day, apart from eating meals and sleeping, there did not seem to be anything else to do. This boredom lasted a whole fifteen days.

One evening, the groups did not wish to go back into that tiny cabin room after eating dinner, so they sat around the table and started to chat.

“Beirut, what’s wrong with you?” Leylin looked at Beirut, who seemed to be in slight discomfort, and asked.

In these ten days, Beirut, who was the reincarnation of a chatterbox, had spoken of topics ranging from his family tree, to how a dish in the capital was created, as if he was speaking fondly to a lover.

Leylin and the rest had already adapted, from being annoyed at his words to getting used to them, and now it was the only joy on this boring journey.

“Yeah! I still want to listen to your past relationships!” Raynor began to jeer.

“I have finished saying everything!” Beirut rolled his eyes, “I cannot think of what to talk about anymore!”

“I’m so bored!” Beirut lamented.

“Endure it; it’s only another half a month away! It was quite a distance from your home to the campground, so how did you spend your time all that while?” Leylin encouraged him, albeit a little curious.

“My house is located in the Porter Kingdom, which is on the edge of the Great Plains of Death. So we reached the campgrounds after walking for half a month!” Beirut said helplessly, as he rolled his eyes again.

“No wonder!” Leylin shook his head.

“Jayden, this is something that I saw first, what do you want?” A silver tray clattered on the floor, letting out a crisp noise.

Leylin turned around and saw Kaliweir growling, his hair slightly standing up like a furious lion.

On the other side, Jayden poked a golden barbecued chicken drumstick with his fork, “It belongs to whoever takes it first!”

Not only did the crowd not stop them, but they all appeared to be waiting to see a good show

On this tiresome journey, Kaliweir and Jayden felt that the other party was unpleasant to their eyes, especially when Jayden tried to take in two henchmen.

They had restrained themselves in the earlier conflicts due to fear, as the Magi were around. However, things seemed to be out of control now.

Leylin furrowed his brows.

“It’s you who forced me to do this!” Kaliweir roared, and the muscles in his body tensed. It seemed like he had added a layer of muscle on his body.

As a noble, he had naturally trained with the techniques of a Knight. Also, he seemed to have already ignited his internal life energy, thus becoming a proper Knight.

[A.I Chip! Scan target!]

[Beep! Kaliweir, Strength: 2.5, Agility: 2.7, Vitality: 3.0, Status: Currently using a secret technique]

[Examination of the Secret Technique: After circulating, Strength increases, Agility increases!]

“Today, I will let you know that you must lower your head in obedience before a prideful lion!” Kaliweir shouted, and moved his legs. An afterimage remained, as he dashed towards Jayden.

[Alert! Alert! Radiation detected! Status: Recommend distancing from source!]

The A.I Chip’s voice sounded in Leylin’s ears.

“Radiation source? Could it be that a Magus has taken action?

“Haha! I will let you know today, who exactly is the number one amongst the freshmen!” Jayden laughed loudly, and took out a green badge from within his chest pocket.

“Pilis-Duwasha! Creature of the green! Hear my calls of summoning, and come out to the mortal world!” Jayden chanted in a strange voice.

What he used was a very rare language, but surprisingly, Leylin had actually understood every word of it.

With the incantation, a layer of light emerged from the green badge and a few brownish vines appeared from the ground and elongated, like a confused snake that was dancing wildly.

Chi Chi !!

The vines danced as they protected Jayden from the front, and as one vine was sent forward, it tripped Kaliweir down to the ground.

The layers of vines continued to coil around him, and Kaliweir was soon wrapped in it completely, with only his face exposed.

“Magic Artifact!” The surrounding acolytes cried in surprise.

“To be able to use a Magic Artifact, one must at least be a Level 1 Acolyte! He.....He has already been promoted to a Level 1 Acolyte?”

The crowd clamoured, and they looked at Jayden with gazes of respect. This only caused Kaliweir’s face to redden even further.

“How is this? As long as you swear to obey me, I will release you!” Jayden walked to where Kaliweir was.

“Ne.....Never! The pride of Golden Lion Family will never be dishonoured by my hands!” Kaliweir veins popped, as if they were going to bleed anytime.

“If it’s like this, then I have no choice!” Jayden shrugged his shoulders and the vines continued to tighten, and few cracking noises even came from within. It seemed like a few of Kaliweir’s bones had been broken.

The surrounding acolytes could not watch on any longer and were about to persuade Jayden.

Bang !!! The Dirigible swayed, and the light dimmed.

A few of the acolytes fell onto the floor, “What happened? Did we meet with some intense turbulence?” Leylin’s eyes flashed.

“Hu!” “Hu!”

The windows cracked open, and violent gusts of wind came rushing in.

Accompanied by the sound of the wind, there were also countless blue electric currents scattering in all directions.

Looking at these, Leylin pupils shrank to the size of a needle, “Thunderstorm? Where are the Magi on the Dirigible?”

“You insignificant vermins, you actually dare to trespass the domain of the mighty Pendra!!”

A voice reverberated, accompanied by a violent thunderstorm.

Chapter 19: Arriving At The Academy

“It’s a matured Giant Storm Sprite!

“Damnit! How could we meet with these kind of things on this path, didn’t we clear it before?”

“Where are the Magi of the various academies? We need their help!!”

A few flustered voices sounded.

“Let us first activate the large-scale Defense Spell Formation. If not, those acolytes will surely die!”

After some incantations, all the walls on the Dirigible were enveloped by a layer of milky white light. All cracks in the Dirigible flashed with a green light as vines climbed up and firmly blocked any openings.

“Hu hu..... “Leylin’s face turned red as he panted heavily.

When the Giant Storm Sprite spoke earlier, the acolytes had all felt an ice-cold force pressing down on them.

Immense, boundless, and raw malice!!! Leylin found it difficult to breathe.

Fortunately, after the Defense Spell Formation was activated, Leylin felt much better as the pressure lifted.

Otherwise, most of the acolytes in the hall might just die from suffocation moments later.

“Human beings, you must pay the price for your folly!” the Giant Storm Sprite howled.

As the sound waves travelled through the Defense Spell Formation, the milky white light vibrated.

“Mighty being of nature! Please appease your fury! We have a letter here!” A familiar voice rang beside Leylin’s ears, it was the Dirigible captain.

“This is the letter of agreement that we had with His Majesty, the Storm King Sprite, which grants us passage through this area!” Kirkwul said with a voice full of confidence.

“Letter of agreement?” The Giant Storm Sprite’s voice contained suspicion, which he followed up with a furious roar, “Pendra is free! The agreement does not bind me to it!!”

“Keep roaring! Rage on! Damikan Buthra!” With the incantation spoken, the thunderstorm outside became ten times more violent than before.

“Damn!!! It is actually a wanderer, I have hit the jackpot!!!”

Kirkwul's voice sounded once again, but it did not carry the usual confidence and was infused with exasperation instead.

“Everyone attack together!!!”

Rumble!!!

Many bright coloured lights flashed continuously outside the window, clashing with the lightning.

The Dirigible gradually started to sway.

Leylin's face turned slightly pale. He could only pray for the Magi to use their might and chase that darn Giant Storm Sprite away, otherwise he would not even be able to escape since he was stuck high up in the sky.

“Bang!!!”

There was another rumble, and the Dirigible recovered its stability.

“Has it left?”

“It is only a Giant Storm Sprite that has just matured, it is only comparable to half of an elemental Magus at most. There are nine of us here, so it running away is natural!

The voices of the Magi discussions sounded from outside. It obviously did not take a lot of effort for them, which eased the minds of the acolytes.

As expected, when the acolytes heard those words, they all shouted and cheered loudly.

“Woo! To our great Magi!”

“Damn it! I thought I would fall and be smashed into minced meat!”

“Haha! Look at that coward; he actually peed in his pants!” The acolytes all mocked an unlucky acolyte, and vented the fear that they had held in their hearts.

Leylin’s eyes scanned the surroundings.

When the Giant Storm Sprite spoke earlier, Jayden had already released the vines binding Kaliweir, and right now it seemed like Kaliweir had escaped. However, although Jayden’s face was rather pale, he stood his ground and maintained the pose of a victor.

“The A.I Chip did not detect that Jayden was carrying a Magic Artifact earlier. It seems like it was only acquired recently, and the only means of that is through Dorotte!!!”

“It seems like after obtaining the Magic Artifact, Jayden has been leading Kaliweir into picking a fight with him impatiently. If not

for this incident, it is very likely that he would have succeeded!” Leylin thought to himself.

Because of the interruption from the Giant Storm Sprite, the fight between Jayden and Kaliweir remained unsettled as it drew its curtains.

From then on, Kaliweir tried his best to avoid appearing in the same place as Jayden. It seemed like he was afraid of his opponent’s Magic Artifact.

This fight had greatly influenced Leylin’s thoughts.

“Kaliweir has already ignited his internal life energy, and got through the bottleneck and became a full fledged Knight. However, in front of an acolyte with a Magic Artifact, he is still as weak as a lamb! It seems like the strength of Magi greatly surpass that of Knights!

“Originally, I thought I must ignite my internal life energy. But after this, if I haven’t ignited it before reaching the school, then I’ll give up on it! I definitely have to pour all my attention and energy into my studies to become a Magus!” Leylin made up his mind.

The time slowly passed, and the Dirigible finally reached another continent.

In addition to the incident with the Giant Storm Sprite, the Dirigible had several encounters with other flying creatures. This

led Leylin to realise that not only was the Death Seas difficult to navigate through, it was the same in the skies.

Fortunately, Kirkwul's letter of agreement was still rather effective in front of the various large creatures and no conflicts were started.

During this period, the Dirigible alighted several times and sent several Professors and acolytes off. The Dirigible slowly became more vacant.

Another dozen days passed unknowingly.

Bang!! The Dirigible landed and the whole interior shuddered.

"We have arrived at the Abyssal Bone Moor! Attention to all acolytes of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! Please bring your belongings and leave the Dirigible in an orderly fashion!" A voice rang through the cabins.

"We've finally arrived?" Leylin packed his belongings and quickly left the tiny space he had been holed up in during the past month.

"Jayden, Kaliweir, please take attendance!" Dorotte held a black staff, with a large green jewel embedded in its tip.

"Alright!" Jayden and Kaliweir nodded their heads and started accounting for the attendance.

Leylin glanced at Kaliweir. Ever since the incident in the dining hall, this youth had turned much quieter and often holed himself in his own room. Looking at his face now, he seemed be gloomier than before.

On the contrary, Jayden was extremely lively, and according to some rumours, he had already been accepted by Dorotte as an apprentice.

Apprentices were different from other acolytes as their status were higher, and they could even freely obtain a lot of advanced knowledge from their professor.

A dozen or so people walked out of the Dirigible.

“So this is our academy? It seems to be a little desolate!”

Leylin looked at the surroundings, and it seemed rather desolate. There were a few small trails with obvious traces of others using it before.

There was a wooden sign in the middle of a crossroad, riddled with several holes.

There were directions written in black, showing the various locations.

“The land of shadows and death - Bone Abyssal Moor!” The words twisted, and Leylin felt his scalp gone numb.

“Hehe..... Follow me!” Dorotte stretched his body leisurely, and his white bones creaked and crunched, as if they were going to fall apart at any moment.

“Pay heed! Although our academy’s acolytes do a scheduled cleansing, there are still some living creatures, and polluted and evil beings roaming in this area. So if you were to stray off, I think we would be able to pay respects to your deceased body soon afterwards!”

Dorotte snickered, and the acolytes’ faces all changed. They followed behind Dorotte closely, for fear of losing him.

The group gradually traversed across the Abyssal Bone Moor.

“What is that?” Leylin walked in the middle of the group, and suddenly something black flashed in front of him. It seemed to be a blue creature with a horn.

“A.I Chip! Begin scan!”

“Task initialising, Begin Scan!” The A.I Chip chip’s robotic voice sounded.

[An unknown creature of high energy! Estimated Strength: 3-

4, Agility: 4-5, Vitality: About 5, Assessment: Extremely dangerous!]

“Ss! Whatever it is, it’s much stronger than the direwolves and may have some strange tricks up its sleeves. A Knight would only die if they encounter one!”

Leylin hurriedly squeezed forward. In this land where danger lurked, it seemed like the black robed skeleton, Professor Dorotte, was his only insurance.

“It seems like our little acolytes have finally understood the dangers!”

The green flames in Dorotte’s sockets flickered as he said indifferently.

The group proceeded forward, and very soon the barren earth lessened and more forestry could be seen around them.

Very soon, Leylin entered a black coloured forest.

He did not know if it was an illusion, but Leylin felt as if the sun in the sky had dimmed after entering the forest, and there was a layer of white mist in the surroundings giving off a chilly feeling.

[Warning! Warning! A high energy being is approaching!

Position: In the air!]

The A.I Chip's warning sounded.

Leylin hurriedly looked down and crouched.

“Kak!” A piercing sound rang.

A black raven with red eyes swooped down and passed by Leylin's position, its sharp claws headed towards the face of a female acolyte.

Boom!!!

A ball of greenish liquid struck at the raven directly, and the raven cawed as it fell onto the floor. A white smoke arose, giving off a corroding effect.

The female acolyte remained rooted to the ground and suddenly cried loudly.

Only seconds later, the raven on the floor disappeared without a corpse and there was only a huge impression left in the corroded earth.

“It seems like these Red-Eyed Ravens increased in numbers yet again. I think I will need to distribute more missions after we

return, and let the acolytes cleanse this area!”

“What are you all looking at? Let’s go!”

Dorotte’s voice sounded at the front and the crying female acolyte rubbed her eyes and gritted her teeth as she walked forward.

Leylin was startled, and hurriedly followed.

After another hour of journeying, the group arrived in the centre of the Abyssal Bone Forest.

“This is.....” Leylin saw a spacious area in front of him.

And what was projected before their eyes, was a large graveyard.

In the hearths of the Abyssal Bone Forest, a large graveyard sat there unknowingly.

This graveyard was extremely huge and was marbled in black and white, seeming luxurious.

Only, it seemed to have been forsaken for some time. Many of the graves had weeds growing on them, and some even had vines. Occasionally, the ravens caw on top of them, giving off a terrifying vibe.

“Welcome to your home of shadow and death - Abyssal Bone Forest!” Dorotte snickered, but no matter how Leylin saw it, Dorotte seemed to be taking joy in their unfortunate plight.

Chapter 20: The Selection Of Mentors

“The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy has a satirical sense of humour, huh; they actually have their academy under a graveyard!”

Leylin shook his head, but he felt rather comfortable, the pores on his body were all open and absorbed the air of the surroundings here.

“A.I Chip! What is the situation now?”

[Beep! Task Establishing! Acquiring sample of the environment, analysis in progress!]

[There is a significant increase in a type of energy particle here which faintly resonates with the Host's consciousness. They are conjectured to be Shadow and Dark particles!]

The A.I Chip's voice travelled over.

“No wonder! There is an increase in the energy particles here, which obviously benefits Shadow and Dark Element Magi. It is like the novels from my previous world, where one must occupy an area that is filled with spirit energy when they practice the cultivation techniques of immortals!”

Leylin gained a slight understanding of the academy's choices.

“Password!”

At this moment, Dorotte had already brought the group to the centermost area in the graveyard, where there was a huge grave. Black marble stones were piled up one by one, making it resemble a huge black castle.

Beside the marbled door, there were two stone statues.

On the left, there was a two-headed dog with spikes growing on its body.

On the right, there was an earthworm with a pair of wings and razor sharp fangs protruding out, exuding a cruel aura.

These two statues were lifelike. They had black jewels for eyes, and looked as if they were alive.

When Dorotte walked in front of the statues, the earthworm on the left side spoke in a parched voice. With each opening and closing of the mouth, dust from the stone continuously fell down onto the floor.

“Enough! Jumal, don't you recognise me?”

Dorotte had a look of annoyance on his face.

Right after Dorotte spoke; the earthworm and huge dog both guffawed. Their voices brought about a huge wind, which flipped the robes of the acolytes behind.

“Dorotte! Although we are pretty familiar with each other, rules are rules!”

Both of the statues seemed to have come alive. The huge dog licked its paws, and let out a female voice.

“Or, would you like to play with us?” The earthworm lifted its claw and made a human-like gesture, beckoning with the claw, “Then come! I feel itchy all over my body!”

“Alright! Alright! Let me think!” Dorotte rolled his eyes.

“Oh! Damnit! I should really take the head of the pig who set up this Defensive Spell Formation and shove it up their ass!”

Dorotte suddenly bellowed.

“Hurry and say it! What is the password?” The huge dog roared and there were sparks coming out from its mouth.

“The secret password is - I hate smelly bones!” Dorotte spoke softly.

Leylin's mouth twisted, and only by using a strong willpower did he manage to suppress his laughter. Although Dorotte wore a skull, Leylin was extremely certain that he was currently sulking.

"Haha! The password is correct!" The earthworm and huge dog laughed loudly and let them pass.

"I bet the overseer keeping watch with the crystal ball is laughing to death right now!" The huge dog snickered, then returned to his original stone platform and changed into its former statue state.

"Puchi!" An acolyte finally found it hard to bear and let out a noise.

"Hng!" Green flames suddenly ignited within Dorotte's sockets, "It seems like we must educate the new acolytes on how to respect their professors!"

Pa! Dorotte snapped his fingers.

"Ah!!! What is this, don't come over here, don't come over!!!" The acolyte who laughed out loud earlier retreated several steps and fell onto the floor, wailing loudly.

"Rousey! What is it!" An acolyte beside him walked forward.

"No.....Don't come over!" Rousey screamed, and his face

gradually twisted.

Seeing this scene, the nearby acolytes all felt a chill down their spines.

“Magi are equal among themselves, so they can afford to play jokes on each other. However, acolytes must always maintain their humility!”

Suddenly, Leylin understood the code of conduct in the Magi world. Only with equal strength, did one have the status to speak to another.

Jayden and Kaliweir also seemed to be deep in thought.

“Carry him up and let us go in!” Dorotte pointed at Rousey, who was still screaming.

Both of his servants walked over and carried Rousey, one on each side.

“Both of them are at least Grand Knights!” Seeing how the two servants subdued Rousey so easily, Leylin’s eyes flashed.

After opening the door to the grave, they all appeared in front of a stone staircase that spiraled downwards.

The flight of stairs was spiralled and descended all the way into

the depths of the darkness, until they could not be seen any more.

Dorotte used his staff and knocked on the floor. Dong Dong!!

Blue flames started to light up one by one, illuminating the ground within.

“Apart from the colour, it’s similar to an ancient castle from the Medieval Times!” Leylin exclaimed, and tread down the stairs of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

Leylin did not know how long exactly he walked for under the illumination of the blue flames, but it was definitely over 20 minutes.

“So huge! The area of this underground building is so much larger than the area of the graveyard on top, and it is not even by several times. It almost resembles an underground kingdom already.”

Leylin calculated in silence.

“Our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was constructed in the Gregorian Year 324, and it has been almost one thousand years since then..... As for our academy founder, it is Merlin Falek Driwilc.....”

Dorotte led at the forefront, and occasionally gave them a few sentences of explanation.

“The door which you all had entered from earlier is the main door! And besides that, there are still many exits inside the academy. As long as you have become a proper Magus, you can apply and chose an uninhabited, empty grave for your own personal passage!”

Dorotte explained.

But Leylin’s lip never stopped twitching, “The purpose for us to advance as a Magus is so we can obtain a grave? How delightful!”

However, ever since the unlucky guy was used as an example earlier, Leylin only dared to rant in his heart and didn’t say it aloud.

Our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is divided into several large areas: the dormitories, classrooms, laboratories, gardening areas, trading post, mission area and such. As for their exact locations, someone will bring you for an induction later. For now, all of you must follow me to register at the administration area, and then we’ll commence the selection of your professors!”

Dorotte came to the front of a slightly larger room, and pointed at the words on the steel door, “This is the administration area, however, I believe none of you will be willing to come here again in the future!”

Seeing the symbols on the door which seemed like both words and patterns at times, Leylin finally acknowledged that none of the

characters were anything like what [the brat](#) had encountered in the past.

[TL Note: The brat refers to the previous host of Leylin's body.]

“Oh! I’ve forgotten that you guys don’t know the ancient Byron language!” Dorotte tapped his head, “No worries! This is one of the basics of incantation, you guys will learn it in the future!”

“Dorotte, huh? Enter!” An aged voice sounded from within, and the steel doors moved automatically. A steel hand opened the bolts on the door, and even beckoned them in.

Leylin followed Dorotte inside, and realised that this room was extremely large. An old man with white beard and red eyebrows was seated at the wide, black office desk. He was scribbling something with a feather pen, and beside him was a stack of parchment.

Behind him, there were countless bookshelves of over ten metres tall, and parchment and even crystal balls were disorderly arranged on them. It looked just like a library.

“You’re late!” The old man put down the quill pen in his hand, and his wrinkled face smiled gently.

“We met with some trouble along the way, a wandering Giant Storm Sprite, so the Dirigible was a little damaged, and hence the delay in time!” Dorotte explained.

The old man said, “That’s really unfortunate!”

And then he looked at the acolytes at the back and his bright eyes shone brilliantly. He scanned through the acolytes, before finally landing on Jayden.

“It seems like you are well rewarded this trip!”

“Of course!” Dorotte pointed, “Jayden, come over here!”

Pulling Jayden to his side, “I have made a contract with him already! He is now my personal apprentice! Hurry! Settle the procedures for him!”

Dorotte took a stack of forms from a heavy black pouch and handed it over to the old man.

“Mn! Fifth grade acolyte, not too bad!” The old man took out an object resembling a pair of glasses with gold threads around its rim, and hung it on his nose.

“Definitely! Melda, that scum, he actually pushed such a troublesome thing to me, haha! Now I want to see him angry!” Dorotte gloated loudly.

“So then! Jayden! Are you willing to become the personal apprentice of Dorotte?” The old man asked.

“I accept!” Jayden looked at Dorotte and agreed in a low voice.

“Good!” The old man took a sheet of parchment and wrote something on it, then handed Jayden a black sack too, “This is yours, hold it well!”

“Are the procedures done? I have taught him those meditation techniques, and right now I have to rush back to my experiments! It was difficult enough to find some inspiration along the way, but I did not have any ingredients on hand, do you know how much I was suffering?”

Dorotte let out a shrill voice and pulled Jayden along, leaving the room quickly.

“Alright! Mister Dorotte’s task is completed. What’s next are the things that you guys should be mindful of!” The old man knocked on the desk and drew the attention of the acolytes back to him, and then said in a satisfied manner.

“Since all of you have already handed in the fees and achieved the criteria for the contract, you are all acolytes of our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy now. Right now, all of you will begin with the selection of your professors!”

“There are two methods to choose a professor. The first is to chose by placing your name inside the crystal ball and my treasure will pick a professor for you! This method is absolutely free of charge.”

“Excuse me? What is your treasure?” An acolyte asked cowardly.

“Oh?” The old man laughed, and suddenly a black python appeared on the table, “This is my magical pet! Spotty! It does not recognise any of you, so I think it’s the fairest for it to choose! Any other questions?”

“No.....No more!” Seeing the large python, the acolyte quickly retreated backwards.

“There is also another method, which is for the acolytes to choose their own professors. Here with me is a list containing short introductions of various professors and their requirements, all for your choosing. Of course, if you choose this method, you will need a magic crystal as payment!”

“It doesn’t matter which method you chose, but once you have decided on your professor, you can never change again!”

The old man said, “Next up, I will call your names, and you will come forward and tell me your choice!”

Chapter 21: Kroft

After the old man finished speaking, the acolytes were a little flustered.

“What now? How should we choose?” Beirut asked worriedly.

“Paying is definitely better than not paying! This is common sense!”

“You should still have excess Magic Crystals, don’t you?” Leylin asked puzzledly.

“But..... I only have 1 Magic Crystal left; my family sacrificed one thousand troops to get merely 2 Magic Crystals!”

Beirut was a little reluctant. Leylin was startled too, as he could not help but feel his pockets.

“The value of Magic Crystals is higher than I expected. When I extorted some from Ourin earlier, I really lucked out!”

“That’s not right, the Chernobyl Islands is also known to Magi as the Barren Islands. Magic Crystals are already scarce, so the value of Magic Crystals being much higher here may be due to that!”

“A matter like this can only be decided by yourself!” Leylin said to Beirut.

“Alright! First up, Raynor!” The old man said.

“Which are you choosing?”

“I.....I don’t have any Magic Crystals left, can I first buy on credit? I am a fourth grade acolyte!” Raynor blushed.

“Not a bad aptitude! A pity however, rules are rules!” The old man shook his head.

As he pointed at a crystal ball on the table, Raynor’s name appeared within, along with many other unfamiliar names, flickering as they appeared.

When the black python Spotty spat out a letter and dabbed on the crystal ball, the words finally stopped flickering, “Raynor! Your mentor is Gafrin!”

“Take this! A set of acolyte robes and an identity badge! A crystal ball which contains an elementary meditation technique! And your room number and keys are there too!”

The old man threw the black sack containing the items to Raynor, and then snapped his fingers. Bang!!! A black ball suddenly appeared in the room and floated in midair.

“Follow this shadow slave, it will bring you to where your

mentor is!”

The old man made a gesture to send him off, and Raynor helplessly followed the black ball out.

“Next! Rousey!”

The one, who laughed at Dorotte earlier, Rousey, was called. Although his complexion had recovered a little, there was still cold sweat on his face.

“Oh! What do I see? A nightmare hex! What a pitiful fellow! You’re going to suffer for the next month!”

“Could.....Could you remove this hex?” Rousey’s voice quivered.

“Definitely! One hundred Magic Crystals! No credit allowed!” The old man agreed crisply!

Rousey shook his head and took a Magic Crystal from his robes, “I want to choose my own mentor!”

“En!” The old man accepted the Magic Crystal, and handed a compendium, which looked like a dictionary, to Rousey, “The mentors who are willing to accept apprentices are all there, take your time and pick!”

“Bang!” An hourglass appeared on the table, the sand falling

slowly.

“I forgot to mention earlier, a Magic Crystal only allows for one turn of the hourglass. If you exceed it, you have to pay another Magic Crystal!” The old man grinned.

Rousey swallowed his saliva, and looking at the sand grains falling non-stop, he flipped through the pages in a hurry.

“This hourglass seems as though it lasts only 5 minutes worth of time! It is not even enough to skim through!” Leylin’s pupils shrank.

“Time’s up!” In accordance with the voice, the compendium closed automatically and made a loud snapping sound.

“How is it? Have you chosen? Or do you wish to have another look?” The old man asked.

“I have decided! I choose Mentor Vivian!” Rousey sucked in a deep breath.

“Take your belongings and follow the slave!” The old man threw a black sack, identical to the one from before, to Rousey and summoned another shadow slave.

Rousey bowed humbly, and followed the floating slave out the large doors.

“Next up, Kaliweir!”

The old man continued calling, and Leylin scrutinised the acolytes who went up. Kaliweir seemed well off, as he paid 3 Magic Crystals and looked through the compendium before making a choice.

“As for Beirut, he did not pay the 1 Magic Crystal in the end. His mentor was chosen randomly, and he did not know if the results were good or bad.

“Next! Leylin!” The old man called Leylin’s name.

Leylin inhaled deeply, and walked to the front.

“I’ll choose on my own!” Leylin handed a Magic Crystal to the old man.

“You know the rules!” The old man snapped, the hourglass flipped over, and time started elapsing.

The compendium was rather heavy, and the material seemed to be of high quality.

Leylin hurriedly flipped through the pages, and continuously skimmed through the information on the parchment.

“It is the language of the Chernobyl Islands. It seems like it has been specially prepared for us acolytes of this area.”

“A.I Chip! Record and extract the information!”

“Mentor Lester, Department of Souls, specialises in transformation, neurology, and composition of radiation.”

Able to provide information on 3 topics free of charge.

Requirements: The acolyte must assist in an experiment every month, and cannot be declined for any reason!!!”

“Mentor Dorotte, Department of Shadow, specialises in anatomy, conversion of energy, and necromancy.”

Requirements: Acolytes must pay 1 Magic Crystal per month, and at the same time, cooperate with experiments!”

“Mentor Kroft, Department of Potioneering, specialises in medicine, herbalism, and neutralisation of energy.”

Able to provide information on 1 topic free of charge.

Requirements: Acolytes must always help with the cleaning of the experimental lab, preparation and handling of various herbs, and at the same time, assist the Magus in carrying out herbal concoctions (on the basis that they cause no harm to the acolytes!)”

“Mentor Estelle, Department of Curses, specialises in curses, dissecting of human anatomy, and soul studies.”

Able to provide information on 5 topics free of charge. The category is chosen by the acolytes, and can guide acolytes in their studies at any given time!

Requirements: Cooperate with one experiment! Only one!!!”

The pages flipped, and let out a rustling noise. By the time the last grain of sand fell, Leylin had managed to flip to the last page.

“Your memory isn’t bad, which is useful for your studies in the future! How is it? Who will you choose?” The old man smiled and asked.

Leylin closed his eyes, “A.I Chip! How is the collation of data?”

[Beep! Data is in order, information on 53 mentors collated. In process of discarding the enticing conditions!]

Leylin's complexion turned bitter, "The information in the brackets for Mentor Kroft earlier made me rather mindful. It seems like the experiments of Magi are dangerous, and can actually jeopardize the safety of the acolytes!"

"Kroft is only doing experiments on herbal concoctions, but what of the others, like the shadow and necromancy experiments?"

"No wonder the requirements given are so easy to meet, not needing to give payment for information. It was, in fact, so they could lure students who would cooperate for experimental testing! Although they might not have any adverse effects, it's all over once they do!"

"A.I Chip! Carry out the filtering process, with the conditions: To match with my current circumstances."

[Beep!!!]

The blue light flashed, and the light blue screen in front of Leylin flickered. More than half of the mentors' information was omitted, leaving only a miserable few choices, including Dorotte's.

"Mentor Dorotte, Department of Shadow, specialises in anatomy, conversion of energy, and necromancy."

Requirements: Acolytes must give one 1 Magic Crystal each month, and at the same time, cooperate with experiments!”

“Mentor Kroft, Department of Potioneering, specialises in medicine, herbalism, and neutralisation of energy.”

Able to provide information on 1 topic free of charge.

Requirements: Acolytes must always help with the cleaning of the experimental lab, preparation and handling of various herbs, and at the same time, assist the Magus in carrying out herbal concoctions (on the basis that they cause no harm to the acolytes!!)”

“It seems like Dorotte’s temper isn’t too bad amongst the mentors. If not, he wouldn’t have gone to fetch the new batch of acolytes.”

Leylin thought inwardly, “A pity that my Magic Crystals are not enough, and he has Jayden already. I’m afraid there will not be much attention given to me!”

“Also the Shadow Department mentors all require acolytes to cooperate with their experiments and cannot ensure the safety of acolytes. This is such a fraud!”

Leylin helplessly omitted the mentors of the Shadow Department.

“What’s left is only this Alchemy mentor! With the extreme and unique advantages that I have with my A.I Chip, I can definitely make use of alchemy to earn money and buy knowledge related to the Dark element!”

To others, Leylin had merely closed his eyes and made his choice right after opening them.

“I choose Mentor Kroft!”

“Alchemy?” The old man was a little surprised, “You wish to become an alchemist? The effort and resources invested are extremely horrifying! Do you want to change? I think Dorotte suits you well!”

“Thank you sir!” Leylin earnestly bowed, “I have a hobby for alchemy, and have also acquired some knowledge in this field beforehand.”

“The mortal world’s perception of alchemy is totally different from that of the world of Magi!” The old man shook his head. Then, seeing Leylin’s resolute gaze, he couldn’t help but exclaim,

“Since you have already decided, so be it!” After speaking, the old man took a quill pen and scribbled on the parchment paper.

“Here are your belongings, follow the shadow slave to where Kroft is!”

The old man handed a sack over to Leylin.

Leylin bowed deeply and even nodded to the remaining acolytes, before leaving through the large door.

The black coloured ball floated in front, and occasionally spun in a circle. Its speed was not too fast, and with Leylin’s body of a peak Preparatory Knight, he easily followed along.

From time to time, there were acolytes passing, but they did not look at Leylin in astonishment.

Leylin followed the shadow slave and passed through several corridors, two large halls, and a garden. It then stopped in front of an area designed for experiment labs.

The shadow slave turned translucent, and immediately passed through the door, leaving Leylin outside.

Leylin was speechless, yet he did not dare knock on the door. Therefore he just waited outside patiently.

After a moment, there came a middle aged man’s voice.

“Leylin, huh? Enter!”

“Yes!” Leylin pushed open the doors of the experimental lab.

A sweet and spicy aroma filled the laboratory room, mingling with the odour of poisonous fumes and liquids, which made Leylin furrow his brows.

A huge table took up the space of almost half the lab, and placed on it were various test tubes, flasks and beakers, as well as some other apparatus that Leylin could not identify. This made Leylin recall his previous life.

In front of the laboratory table, there stood a white haired, middle aged man who wore white robes. His collar was embroidered with golden patterns, and his eyes emitted a golden light, like two golden gems.

“I’m Kroft, and I’ve heard the details from the shadow slave. So then, Leylin, are you willing to become my apprentice?” The middle aged man put down the test tube in his hands, and said solemnly.

Chapter 22: Meditation Technique

“I am willing!” Leylin hurriedly answered.

“That’s good! Since these are the arrangements made by the school, I’ll accept you as my disciple!” The middle aged man stroked his beard.

“Although the environment here is quite ordinary, it’s enough to let you undergo the initiation!” Kroft swept his eyes over the examination room. “At least it’s very quiet here and we won’t be disturbed!”

“What initiation?” Leylin had some doubts.

“The initiation of a Magus!” Kroft replied.

“Now tell me, Leylin, what is a Magus to you?”

“A mysterious person with the ability to call forth thunder and storms, manipulate flames and other forces of nature!” Leylin said the definition he knew of in Chernobyl Islands.

“En! However, it’s a little off!” Kroft commented.

“A Magus is actually the title we give to people with power in ancient times. These Magi all learn the principles and how to control and manipulate the energy within. They are never ending

in their pursuit of knowledge and truth!”

Kroft explained the definition of Magi to Leylin.

“So it is to say, the title of Magus is actually not limited to only humans!” Leylin had a better understanding now.

“Indeed! Other kinds of demi-humans, and even other intelligent beings, have Magi existing among their kind, for example, a Magus of the sea tribes, or even a Dragon Magus!”

Kroft said, “Alright! Now let us begin the rites! Don’t be afraid, it’s very simple!”

Clap! The floor around Kroft softened, and transformed into a spell formation of sorts, and a strange energy came spreading from within.

The surroundings turned dark, with only the flame lit in the centre of the formation.

“Right now, give your hand to me!” Leylin stretched his hand out and a larger palm firmly clasped it.

“Abiding by the rites of ancient times, I will now guide you, Leylin Farlier, onto the path of a Magus!”

“Recite after me!”

“I swear! I will forever be in pursuit of the truth!” Kroft used an unfamiliar language, but Leylin understood it completely, and his mouth could not help but produce the same sounds.

“I swear! I will forever be in pursuit of the truth!” As it was a voice of a thirteen or fourteen year old youth, there was still a little immaturity in the voice.

“Without the permission of my mentor, I swear that I will not reveal any of the information my mentor passes on to me.....”

Kroft continued to recite and Leylin followed suit, the two voices very soon eerily turned into one.

In the hearts of the formation, the flame suddenly grew brighter and blazed strongly.....

“Congratulations on formally becoming an acolyte!”

After the rites, Kroft congratulated Leylin.

Leylin looked down at both of his hands. After the mysterious rites, it seemed like he saw the world in a different light, yet at the same time, he couldn't pinpoint the difference.

[An anomaly has been discovered in the brainwaves of the

The A.I Chip's voice sounded.

“It seems like there is a change in Spiritual Force, but I don't have any further information regarding this field, so I can only supplement it in the future!” Leylin said helplessly.

“The meditation technique in the crystal ball has already been given to you, right? Take a look at it when you go back, you can already absorb the information in it now!”

“Tomorrow, come here at six in the morning!”

“You can leave now, but remember! Don't wander around!” Kroft warned.

“I'll do as you bid! Mentor!” Leylin bowed, and then walked out of the experimental lab.

“Luckily I passed them earlier; otherwise I wouldn't even know where the dormitories are located!” When he was following the shadow slave earlier, Leylin had already let the A.I Chip start mapping the area. Now, there was a small part that was completed, and he knew the places that he had walked past before.

The areas with Magi are rather dangerous, and Leylin did not wish to suffer from any collateral damage from them.

After reaching the dorms, Leylin took the key out from the sack issued by the old man.

It was a heavy, black copper key, and it was labelled '783'. Right now, it was rather cold and vacant in the dorms. Leylin walked through the empty corridors, and his hair stood on end as he listened to the echo of his footsteps.

Following the room numbers, he found his room, "It's here!"

Leylin placed the key into the keyhole, and the heavy metal produced a click.

As the large door opened, the dark room automatically produced a flame, "They actually use the principles of Magi to invent a similar sound activation system?"

Leylin placed his belongings down and inspected the place in which he was going to live for some years.

The dormitory was a little small and was divided into three partitions, a bedroom, living room and washroom. They were actually self-contained living quarters, and there was even a new blanket placed on the bed, it looked prim and proper.

"The environment isn't bad!" Leylin sat on the bed, and took out the things that were given by the academy.

“A set of acolyte robes. The A.I Chip has detected that there are several spells casted on it, and the defense is even comparable to some of the leather armour around, great stuff!” Leylin efficiently changed into the robes, and pinned the acolyte badge to his chest.

This look was exactly the same as the grey robed acolytes he had seen earlier today.

What Leylin did next was to pack his things, and do a cleaning of the room.

When he went out, the doors of the dorm beside him opened, and a brown haired acolyte walked out, “Hello! Are you a new acolyte? I am Bill!”

“Hello! I am Leylin, and I have just arrived today!” Leylin answered, and he just happened to have some questions, “Excuse me, how do I get to the dining hall?”

Hearing Leylin’s voice, Bill’s expression appeared as if he had expected it, “Right now it’s pretty late, and I’m about to go there too. Let’s go together?”

“I couldn’t ask for more!” Leylin smiled gently, and closed his door.

“The dining hall is on level 3, underground, and everything there is free. Of course, you can fork out money and let them make a dish that you want to eat!”

Bill led the way as he explained.

“I am from Poolfield Kingdom, and you?”

“Chernobyl Islands!”

“Heavens! So far! You have definitely suffered along the way, huh?” Bill was obviously a chatterbox, and Leylin managed to probe some information out from him.

Bill was the same as him, a new acolyte, and only arrived five days earlier than Leylin did. As for the whole of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the professors numbered close to a hundred, while the acolytes numbered over a thousand.

“Oh right! Who is your mentor?” Bill asked.

“Kroft, an alchemy professor!” Leylin replied.

“Alchemy? You’re good!” Bill was seemingly startled.

“Is it difficult to learn alchemy?” Leylin was a little worried now.

“Not only is it difficult, the study of alchemy requires a huge amount of resources and ingredients. People who don’t come from a good family background will rarely choose this! However, alchemists tend to make a lot of money after they have been

certified!” Bill gave Leylin a regretful look.

“You must have been randomly assigned a mentor during the selection, and then duped by that python Spotty!”

“Oh really?” Leylin rubbed his nose.

“Alright! We’re here at the dining hall now, take whatever you want to eat!”

The dining hall was extremely extravagant, and the food was more delicious than what he had on the Dirigible. Everyone who sat here was also an acolyte, and there were no signs of a Magus.

After dinner, Leylin bid farewell to Bill and then returned to his room. He sat on his bed, with the crystal ball clasped in his hands.

“I can finally start practicing as a Magus!”

Leylin stroked the crystal ball, his eyes gradually turned hazy, and his nostrils flared.

[A data interface has been discovered, start transmitting or not?]

The A.I Chip’s voice sounded.

“Begin!” At Leylin’s command, an acute pain entered his brain, as if someone filled it with lead.

“This is..... “ Leylin grabbed his head, and discovered that many images and words appeared in his brain along with the pain, and the first line was: “Elementary Meditation Technique!”

This information appeared out of nowhere, and was firmly imprinted in Leylin’s mind.

After some time, Leylin finally recovered from the pain, but he was still feeling groggy.

“A.I Chip, defragment the data for the elementary meditation technique!”

[Beep! Task established, beginning defragmentation!]

A blue interface started to flicker in front of Leylin’s eyes.

[Beep! The data has been defragmented. 21.3% of miscellaneous information has been removed, begin to transmit?”]

“Transmit!” Leylin ordered.

With the continuous transmission from the A.I Chip, Leylin began to gain an understanding of the elementary meditation technique for acolytes.

Elementary meditation techniques are, as their name implies, special meditation techniques given to acolytes, and are the most basic of techniques. After many years of modification, they have already reached a near perfect stage, and the content of the elementary meditation techniques from the various academies did not differ by much.

To be specific, they are similar to the visualisation techniques from his previous world. An acolyte draws mind runes inside their mind to increase their Spiritual Force, and as they draw more mind runes, their Spiritual Force grows stronger.

Every Magi liked to record all the precise details and processes down.

In regards to acolytes, they have divided the practice into three levels: Level 1 Acolyte, Level 2 Acolyte, and Level 3 Acolyte.

As for the division between levels, it is seen through the progression of the elementary meditation technique.

When one has the ability to meditate with 8 runes, they have passed the criteria for a Level 1 Acolyte. Being able to meditate

with 24 runes is the sign of a Level 2 Acolyte. As for Level 3 Acolytes, there seems to be other conditions needed.

As for the meditation progress, it is closely related to a Magus' aptitude.

“In regards to meditation practice, the superiority of a fifth grade acolyte is extremely obvious; they can become a Level 1 Acolyte in only five to six days. No wonder Jayden, who was a regular human before boarding the Dirigible, was able to use a Magic Artifact in just half a month's time.”

As for a fourth grade acolyte, the time needed to become a Level 1 Acolyte is approximately fifteen to twenty days. Third grade acolytes will need a month's time; second grade acolytes will need half a year, and first grade acolytes will need several years!”

“This difficulty in progressing will only increase when ascending to Level 2 Acolyte and Level 3 Acolyte, hence is it understandable for professors to favour acolytes with high aptitudes. After all, maybe one can receive the remuneration of a proper Magus in a dozen years, with just a little more effort put in now!”

[An independent file has been created for the meditation technique data, analyse or not?]

The A.I Chip prompted with a window.

“Begin analysing!”

[In the process of analysing! Progress: 0.11%]

The A.I Chip showed the current state.

“This crystal ball seems to input the information directly into the acolytes’ brains, but the method is a little too crude and it does not care if you remember it completely or not. But the A.I Chip is able to defragment and store it directly in the memory bank, and is even able to aid by analysing the process!”

Leylin indifferently compared the differences between the two.

Chapter 23: Within The Academy

Compounds

“Tick Tock! Tick Tock!”

The hands of the bronze clock in the room swiveled around once more, as another hour passed.

[The first mind rune has been analysed, start transmitting or not?]

The A.I Chip prompted.

“Has it finally been analysed? Begin transmission!”

In this period of time, Leylin had also been studying the blueprints of the meditation technique, but it was to no avail.

The mind rune appeared as a 3D image and the patterns inside were extremely complicated, with no room for errors.

To display this image in book form, not only would the author need to have outstanding training in the fine arts, but the reader’s comprehension skills would also be put to the test.

Leylin estimated that regular acolytes would need to spend a

good number of days to even begin to understand a single mind rune, before starting to construct them in their brains. However, with the A.I Chip, it was done in a matter of hours.

“This pace may very well be comparable to a fourth or fifth grade acolyte!” Leylin estimated.

After the A.I Chip’s transmission, Leylin had already completely comprehended the structure of the first mind rune. It was in the shape of an ‘A’, without the horizontal line in the middle, and was filled with patterns and helixes, making one dizzy the more they looked at it.

“To begin the meditation, I must first have peace of mind and imagine a serene lake.....”

Leylin slowly closed his eyes.

In the dimly lit room, the youth sat cross-legged and closed his eyes, as if he was in a slumber.

After an unknown period of time, there were a few spots of lights flickering in the youth’s surroundings. They entered the body of the youth, and very soon they disappeared.

Leylin’s eyelids fluttered, and he opened his eyes.

“So tiring! It seems like the meditation technique and a Knight’s breathing technique is the same, there is a time limit! A.I Chip!

Check my body's status!"

[Beep! Scanning the Host's body!]

[The Host's brain cells have been stimulated, and all of the cells in the body have increased in activity as a whole!]

[Beep! The Host's Vitality has increased by 0.05!]

Oh..... Meditation techniques, there's no doubt that they are cultivation techniques for Magi. I can feel that the key purpose of this meditation technique is to increase the Spiritual Force, and the increase in Vitality is only an added benefit."

"The Spiritual Force affects my stats! After practicing the meditation technique, my Vitality has actually started to exceed my previous limit!" Leylin's expression was complex, and there was an indescribable joy in his heart.

"According to the introduction in the data, sleeping right after meditation will provide the most optimal effects!"

Leylin stripped his outer robes, laid on the bed, and then entered into a deep sleep.

[Beep Beep! The alarm is ringing!]

The A.I Chip's voice rang, and brought Leylin out from his sleep.

"It is already the time that I set my alarm for, time really passes quickly!" Leylin stretched lazily, and saw that the clock showed the time as 5:30.

"I'd better hurry up and tidy up! I still need to see Mentor Kroft!" Leylin washed up quickly, went to the dining hall and gobbled down a bread for his breakfast, and then rushed to the experiment lab from yesterday.

"Good morning Sir!" Leylin greeted.

He noticed a female acolyte beside the white haired Kroft. She had fine curves and looked beautiful, and seemed to be another apprentice of the professor.

"Hm? You attempted the meditation technique?" Kroft furrowed his brows, "How did it feel?"

"My head ached, and I felt a little dizzy!"

"This is a common aftereffect of the transmission from the

memory crystal ball; you just need to get more rest during this period!” Kroft said.

“Come, let me introduce you! This is Bicky, my other apprentice. This is Leylin, the new acolyte from yesterday!”

“Hi!” Bicky bowed, giving a virtuous greeting.

“Hello!” Leylin placed his right arm on his chest, and displayed the elegance of a noble.

“Bicky is your senior, besides her, you also have another senior called Merlin. His Potioneering skills are excellent!” Kroft said to Leylin.

“Merlin has been called a once-in-a-century genius of Potioneering, and is regarded as the most likely successor of our mentor!” Bicky added.

“Haha! Indeed! Merlin has shown outstanding talent in Potioneering! If there is anything you don’t understand, you may seek his help!” Once he mentioned Merlin, Kroft’s face revealed a smile, and he seemed extremely satisfied with that student of his.

“So Leylin, are you familiar with my rules?”

“I have seen them when going through the professor requirements during the selection of mentors!” Leylin nodded.

“Okay! From now on, you have to come here every day and help with the cleaning up, but you may go listen to the free lessons during breaks! As for the benefit of being under me, which is receiving information on a topic, you can choose and ask me after learning the basics!”

Kroft said.

“Thank you Sir!” Leylin hurriedly bowed. Right now, he had no inkling whatsoever about the Magus world, so even if Kroft wanted him to choose, he would not know which was best. It was only right to choose at a later time, when he could reap the most benefits.

“Right now, I will give both of you half a day’s break. Let Bicky accompany and show you around the academy. Bicky, tell him about the few restrictions!”

“Yes!” Leylin and Bicky nodded their heads and left the laboratory.

“This is the residence of the professors, acolytes usually aren’t allowed to enter.....This is the Trading Post, where acolytes can make transactions with others. And here, we have the Mission Area. The different missions and levels will be written on this stone wall. Acolytes can complete these missions and obtain contribution points and Magic Crystals!”

Bicky’s voice was extremely pleasing to the ears, and she was

beautiful too. Her personality was also lively. Leylin's mood improved a lot by spending time with her.

The two of them strolled through the academy. It was mostly Bicky leading Leylin around, as she spoke of a few places and restrictions along the way.

Unknowingly, the two of them walked into a garden.

"Fayle, well done!" "Good, once more!"

The sound of voices caught Leylin's attention. In the middle of the garden, a group of acolytes were standing around a large, sturdily-built youth and chatting continuously.

In the centre of the crowd was a youth with a bright silver hair, with dark green eyes, and he seemed to have some sort of strange charisma.

"That is senior Fayle. He's a genius; he became a Level 2 Acolyte just half a year after entering the academy!" Bicky's eyes were widened, and her face shone radiantly as she muttered.

"This expression? It seems like Bicky has a good impression of this Fayle!" Leylin rubbed his nose.

"Bicky! Bicky!"

“Ah.....What is it?” Only after Leylin called out to her several times did Bicky avert her gaze. At this moment, her face was a little flushed.

“Oh! I wanted to ask, why are there so many plants here underground!”

Leylin sniffed a red flower; the flower had a strong fragrance.

“There are huge patches of sunlight moss on the roof of the gardens, and these mosses can emit a light similar to sunrays, hence plants can also grow underground in here.”

Bicky explained.

“Oh!” Leylin nodded his head and wondered if he should come here more often in the future to bask in the sunlight, since being exposed to more sunlight was not bad for a person after all.

Seeing Bicky’s reluctance to leave, Leylin purposely pretended to have a strong interest in the garden, until Fayle and the others left.

Only, Bicky would only glance at Fayle secretly, although she did not muster any courage to walk up to greet him even after such a long while. This made Leylin roll his eyes, as Bicky’s attitude towards romance can be considered rare in this academy.

“The Academic Area will often post the following day’s class schedule, and there are many free and public lessons to choose

from. As a newbie, you cannot afford to miss these!”

After leaving the garden, Bicky brought Leylin to the Academic Area, and pointed to a large wooden board. In front of it were many other acolytes who were taking down notes.

“Free public lessons? That means there are lessons which one must pay for?” Leylin asked.

“That’s right! There are lessons which have fees, and many advanced topics charge 1 Magic Crystal for 10 lessons. Although they are much better than public lessons, they are still somewhat inferior to the knowledge given by our own mentors!”

Bicky smiled a little bitterly, “I’m afraid the only advantage is them being less expensive!”

Leylin nodded. On one side, there was a professor teaching dozens of students, while the other was an individual lesson, the advantages between the two are definitely different.

However, he had the A.I Chip, so his learning capability was outstanding. He was confident that he would do well even in a large class.

“With this method, I can definitely save some Magic Crystals!” Leylin stroked his chin.

He only had two Magic Crystals left. Earlier, when he was in the

Mission Area, he saw that the missions that awarded Magic Crystals generally had more troublesome tasks, and required one to be a Level 1 Acolyte at least. Right now, Leylin did not meet the requirements.

“As for the cleaning tasks, they are all done by those spell slaves, and the rest are all snatched by others. There is simply no place for me!”

Leylin was a little frustrated. Magic Crystals were the currency among Magi, and were also the most common way to obtain greater knowledge in the academy. Without Magic Crystals, his studies would be hindered.

“Hm..... I had better attend those public classes first and advance to a Level 1 Acolyte. After that, I’ll consider taking up missions to earn some Magic Crystals!”

Leylin sighed.

“A.I Chip, how is the mapping of the academy?”

[Beep! 66.7% has been mapped]

The A.I Chip replied. In front of Leylin was a blue image, each layer of the buildings was displayed and divided into multiple parts, and it looked like a beehive.

Some areas even had names attached, with Bicky's explanation for them on the side.

The areas that could be entered freely were marked in green, while the dangerous areas were in yellow. As for the areas that even Bicky did not dare enter, the A.I Chip indicated them in red, representing extreme danger.

For those red coloured danger zones, Leylin decided to walk around them. He even decided not to ask about them before becoming a Level 3 Acolyte.

"The mapping has been recorded!" Leylin nodded his head and said farewell to Bicky, "Bicky, thank you for accompanying me for a day, I remember most of the important areas of the academy now!"

"That's great!" Bicky played with the little white flower in her hands, "If there are any things that you don't understand, you can ask me!"

"Of course!" Leylin gave a small smile.

After bidding farewell to Bicky, Leylin ate his dinner and went back into his room. He began to practice the meditation technique.

A Magus's meditation is a continuous journey, only with daily devotion and perseverance, can one achieve enough Spiritual Force

to become a being that can control mysterious powers.

“The A.I Chip is only useful for analysing the meditation technique. As for the creation of the mind runes, it was completely dependent on my own Spiritual Force, and it also relied a little on my comprehension and aptitude. In these areas, the A.I Chip was not much help!”

After meditating, Leylin felt his Spiritual Force increase by another tiny sliver, and then he entered into a deep slumber.

Chapter 24: Level 1 Acolyte

“A Level 1 Acolyte is actually someone with a stronger Spiritual Force than an average person’s. At the same time, he is able to move energy particles and store them inside their body, and is a newbie at conceptualising the creation of magic power. Only a Level 2 Acolyte will be able to access a magic spell’s formula and cast the spell in its complete form.

But once their body creates magic power, their stats can be strengthened through constant radiation as their body resists the poisoning from the external radiation.

Leylin made his judgment on the levels separating the acolytes based on the data on the meditation technique.

“A.I Chip! Retrieve all the data I have gathered today, and begin analysing!”

This is what Leylin had been doing all this time. He would do his best to collect data from other people without drawing their attention, and store the data in folders.

He created a folder with the data regarding Spiritual Force and how to transform them, a lesson which Leylin learnt yesterday. The information required was too much, and the process may be measured in years.

[Beep! Analysis completed. Result: The entire surroundings of

Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is contaminated with traces of radiation. The biggest sources of contamination are Magi, and a few experimental setups and materials. The Host is suggested to stay away from these sources, or to increase the resistance of the body!]

“As I expected! There are no regular human beings in the whole of this academy because of the environmental effects that the Magi and acolytes bring about. As for these effects, only a Magus can resist against it. A regular human would most likely have a lifespan of a few years in this environment!”

Leylin’s face darkened, and conjured up the images of a few people, including Bicky and Kroft.

“According to the readings of the radiation emitted by them, a Magus is actually a moving source of radiation. Each one of them is like a miniscule nuclear reactor, or, could they have made use of the radiation to advance??”

Leylin furrowed his brows.

“No matter what, I must hurry up and become a Level 1 Acolyte. The longer I take, the greater the damage my body will receive.

Leylin was resolved.

In the next two weeks, Leylin would report to where Kroft was

every day, assist in the cleaning of the experiment lab, and sort out a few insignificant experiment resources.

In this period, he had seen Kroft's genius apprentice Merlin, who was also his senior. Merlin was extremely tall, and had a very taciturn personality. He constantly poured over his experiments. Besides Kroft, his interactions with Bicky and Leylin were minimal. This could be one factor attributing to his success in Potioneering.

In the remaining time, he spent them in the free public lessons.

The free lessons in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy were not many, and they only consisted of the history of Magi, the basics of the ancient Byron language, the principles of Magi spells, basic Potioneering, anatomy, and basic magic spell theory.

The professors of the public lessons always had dark expressions, and they hurriedly left right after the period ended. Not only did they not answer the acolytes' questions, it seemed like everyone owed them Magic Crystals.

"It was a public lesson after all, being able to listen is already not too bad!" Leylin comforted himself. He had the A.I Chip and could record the lessons completely. In the future, he could always take them out for reference when he revises. As for the other acolytes, they were in a worse state. If they did not understand, there was always a price to pay to obtain information from the professors or other acolytes. Leylin was even prepared to earn some Magic Crystals by giving away information from these public lessons.

“Today’s topic was really difficult! The image of that Barren Lizard’s anatomy was only shown for a few seconds. I did not even have time to look at it clearly!” Bill complained.

“There’s no choice! The study of anatomy is a very broad topic, and the images are aplenty, classes will not end if they’re not taught fast enough!” Leylin replied by his side. He was neighbours with Bill, and both of them were fresh acolytes, so they often attended classes together. Their friendship considered pretty good.

As for Kaliweir and the others, because they were designated to various mentors and lived rather far away, they barely maintained their relationships.

“Professor Marlene’s anatomy classes are prerequisites for more advanced topics, so we have to learn it!” Bill was a little frustrated.

“Leylin, did you remember everything from earlier?”

“To memorise everything is impossible, but I have taken notes on most of the diagrams and the images depicting the vital body parts!” Leylin concealed his trump card.

“So awesome! Could you tutor me after classes? I will fork out one Magic Crystal!” Bill made up his mind,

“I want to major in Transfiguration, so I must excel in anatomy!”

“No problem!” Leylin smiled and nodded his head.

The information of the few paid lessons in the academy was not allowed to be traded in private. But as for the public lessons, there were no such restrictions.

Leylin had asked around, and it seemed that the higher level acolytes did not think much of these measly wages, while the lower level acolytes did not have much confidence to teach and failed to meet the requirements. Hence, this benefitted him greatly.

“However, you know that I have to undergo meditation at night, so let’s schedule the lessons right after dinner. 1-hour lessons for a week. How is it?”

Leylin asked.

“No problem!” Bill answered. This amount of time was similar to that of the paid public lessons, but the tutoring was done one-on-one, so it was a fair price.

After dinner, Leylin went to Bill’s room and tutored him on the topic of anatomy. After an hour, he returned to his dorm.

Playing with the Magic Crystal in his hand, Leylin nodded his head, “Bill knows how to conduct himself, and he has already paid the fees upfront!”

Placing the black crystallised object onto the bed, Leylin took out

the black sack hanging from his waist, and poured the contents out on the bed.

A total of four black Magic Crystals were dropped onto the bed, bouncing slightly.

“I am a new acolyte and have only studied for half a month. Apart from Bill and some others, no one believes in my abilities. I have only earned 2 Magic Crystals so far!”

“Ai! It’s hard to earn money through tutoring, and it takes up a lot of time. Senior Merlin can brew a random potion and earn ten times faster than me by selling it!”

Potioneering Masters are rather rare amongst Magi, and a huge investment is needed to become one. However, after succeeding, one can make money at a terrifying pace.

“Almost there! I have a feeling that I will become a Level 1 Acolyte tonight!” After reaching Level 1 Acolyte, I will be able to move the energy particles in the air. Not only will I be able to resist the radiation from the academy’s buildings, I will also be able to attempt to experiment with basic potion brewing!”

Leylin’s eyes flashed with excitement, but very soon he recovered the Magic Crystals on the bed properly, exercising restraint. He then sat cross legged on the bed, and began the meditation for the day.

The air in the room quietened down, and only the faint sounds of Leylin's breathing could be heard.

Leylin's chest moved with an undulating pattern and his expression was serene, with only some restless movements beneath his eyelids.

After about an hour, several black spots of light radiated from Leylin's forehead, just like fireflies.

These light spots hovered around Leylin, and finally entered his orifices. It looked a little eerie.

“Hu.....”

After the black coloured spots of light entered Leylin's body, he felt his whole body shudder. The muscles on his face twitched, and large beads of sweat rolled down. Very soon, he returned back to having a peaceful state.

After some time, Leylin opened his eyes.

“I have finally advanced to a Level 1 Acolyte! This speed of half of a month is slightly inferior to a regular fourth grade acolyte's.”

“Originally, I could have advanced five days ago, but I stopped to stabilise my Spiritual Force. There were few difficulties in advancing this time, which may be attributed to that!”

The one reason for prolonging the date of advancement was to stable the Spiritual Force, and another was to keep a low profile.

A regular third grade acolyte must take around a month's time to turn into a Level 1 Acolyte after receiving the meditation technique.

As for half a month's time, that was the measure of a fourth grade acolyte. Leylin did not wanted to undergo any tests caused by suspicions of him having the wrong aptitude. If the A.I Chip was discovered in the end, not only would it be lost, his life might also be in danger!

After all, the A.I Chip now has undergone changes after transcending dimensions. It has already fused together with his soul and cannot be separated at all.

“According to the estimations of the A.I Chip, a Level 1 Acolyte's Spiritual Force is roughly double that of an average adult. Moreover, Spiritual Force seems to have a life of its own, strongly attracting the energy particles in the air towards it!”

Leylin stretched his hands, and a layer of black coloured light wrapped around his arm, like a layer of cotton candy. It also felt a little cooling.

“I have the highest elemental affinity with the Dark element, and will choose to cultivate on the path of the Dark element. This was the plan that I set for myself since long ago. As for the energy

particles of Fire and the other elements, I shall just keep a few of them to use it to my advantage in future!”

“Pa!!”

Leylin snapped his fingers several times, and a layer of faint blue light lit up on his body.

What followed next was a layer of steam, which made Leylin’s clothes wet.

“This is similar to taking a shower!” Leylin smiled, and then a layer of red light shone.

As Leylin’s body was enveloped by the red light, water vapour emitted from his body. Very soon the water was all evaporated, and the room seemed to be a little humid.

“After becoming an acolyte, I am able to use these energy particles for simple daily activities, this is really convenient!”

Leylin exclaimed again, and asked, “A.I Chip, have you recorded the processes earlier?”

[Beep! Recording done, please provide a name!]

["Simple usage of Water element and Fire elemental energy particles!"]

[Beep! The renaming is done, storing in data bank]

With the help of the A.I Chip, Leylin had one of the best comprehension abilities for the usage of energy particles amongst the Level 1 Acolyte.

Leylin smiled, but as he was about to stand, he suddenly felt giddy.

"I overspent my Spiritual Force earlier!" Leylin realised the reason and smiled bitterly, "The Spiritual Force of a Level 1 Acolyte is still too minuscule. To properly use the energy particles on a daily basis, I must only do it when I am a Level 3 Acolyte at least.

Leylin rubbed his temples, "I already meditated earlier, so now I can only sleep to replenish my Spiritual Force!"

He hurriedly straightened out the room, and entered into a deep sleep.

The next morning, Leylin was filled with vigor as he got off the bed, and headed to Mentor Kroft's experiment lab.

“Oh? This energy movement?”

The white haired Kroft was startled, and immediately looked at Leylin who had walked in, “Leylin, you have broken through!”

“Yes!” Leylin humbly lowered his head.

“It has only been twenty odd days since you started meditating, it seems like your aptitude amongst the third grade acolytes is outstanding, and it almost reaches that of the fourth grade acolytes!”

Kroft smiled with gratification.

Chapter 25: Elementary Potioneering

“Professor! I have already become a Level 1 Acolyte and have understood the basics from the public lessons.....”

Leylin said softly.

“I know, you wish to choose the subject for the knowledge I am providing!” Kroft interrupted Leylin’s speech.

“I heard that you have already been teaching other acolytes information from the public lessons that you’ve attended to earn Magic Crystals. It seems like your learning and memorising abilities are rather outstanding. From what I see now, you have the capability to learn a information of a higher tier!”

“Thank you!” Leylin bowed deeply.

Leylin had some understanding towards the paid lessons in the academy. Although professors have information on a higher level, it was only their own findings.

As for the other cutting-edge research, including the results from various personal experiments, information was only traded at the professors’ level.

This information was deemed the best, and can even be transferred directly into an acolyte’s memory so they will never forget it.

However, the fees were also the most expensive, each subject required at least ten Magic Crystals, and Leylin simply could not afford it right now.

The only thing he could hope for was the one free subject that Kroft promised at the start.

Kroft nodded his head, and moved the apparatus on his table aside. He then retrieved some strange items from god-knows-where and placed them on the table.

There was a huge book with a yellow cover, a crystal ball, and a test tube filled with yellowish liquid.

“These three items represent my 3 areas of specialisation: The book on the left represents the Neutralisation of Energy, the crystal ball represents Herbalism, and the test tube represents Potioneering. Make your choice!” Kroft said.

“I choose Potioneering!” The reason Leylin chose Kroft as his mentor was to advance in Potioneering and then rely on selling potions to earn money for his studies, so naturally he chose this.

Elementary Potioneering is an advanced course stemming from the public Potioneering Basics course. In theory, it is possible to start brewing potions after fully understanding these two lessons.

“I knew you would choose this!” The middle-aged Kroft revealed

a smile.

“The art of potion brewing is extremely complex and complicated, the slightest mistake will result in a failure. All of the Potion Masters have spent a vast amount of resources to accumulate their experience. Are you ready for this?”

“Yes, Sir! I believe in this saying: You may not be rewarded for hard work, but without hard work, there will definitely be no reward!”

“Indeed! A very good mindset. One needs to have this philosophy on the road to truth!” Kroft nodded and handed the yellow test tube to Leylin.

“This is yours now!”

“This? How do I use it?” Leylin looked at the test tube in his hands.

“Just drink from it directly!”

Leylin opened the wooden plug and poured the yellowish liquid into his mouth.

An obnoxious sewer stench infiltrated his senses, and the smell lingered in his nose. Leylin’s face turned red, and tears even came out.

He barely managed to swallow it as he gasped for air.

“I swear, I have never drunk such a smelly thing before!!!”

Smelly!!! An unimaginable stench constantly shocked Leylin’s nerves, making him feel like fainting.

Under the stimulation of the extreme smell, the surroundings appeared blurry to Leylin, and the items in the vicinity all seemed to be distorted.

“You.....It feels.....Not so.....”

Leylin looked at Kroft, and at this moment, the professor looked like a noodle, twisting and distorting. The professor’s lips opened and closed and he spoke sporadically, which brought about a lot of noise. It sounded like the friction produced between two metals, or some broken radio with poor signal.

Leylin raised his hand, his smooth palms seemed to be filled with folds, and even melted like a candle, falling down one drop at a time.

And finally, Leylin’s entire body turned into a puddle of liquid and disappeared completely into the darkness.....

“How do you feel?”

Kroft's voice rang, and Leylin was startled. He touched his head, the hard sensation bringing along warmth and a little moisture.

The surroundings turned back to normal, and Kroft stood there smiling.

"I don't feel too good!" Large amounts of sweat trickled down from Leylin's head.

"Was what I saw earlier an illusion? It felt too real!"

"That is a normal occurrence, the illusionary spells of Magi seem like reality to acolytes, and some acolytes have even experienced their whole life inside the illusions and died of old age!"

Kroft's voice sounded.

"The information has already been transferred into your brain, do some more meditation after you go back!"

At this moment, Leylin discovered a block of new information inside his brain. A phrase appeared on the right side of the text, saying: "Elementary Potioneering"

"Alright! Today your task is to sweep Area 3, and also freeze all the Fire Ant Grass....."

Kroft handed out the tasks.

Leylin nodded his head and picked up the tools lying in the corner of the lab, and then headed to Area 3.

“Congratulations, Leylin!” During Leylin’s break time, Bicky came before Leylin.

“I was just lucky!” Leylin smiled lightly.

Bicky had come here a year earlier than him and was also a Level 1 Acolyte.

“Once you are a Level 2 Acolyte, you will be able to use rank 0 spells! Also, the mind runes will only get increasingly difficult. I still have to persevere for at least another year of meditation before I have a chance at advancing.”

With the A.I Chip, Leylin was fully aware of the situation he was in.

On the other side, Merlin, who was boring over his experiments, raised his head and forced a smile that was uglier than crying.

Leylin nodded his head in acknowledgement. He knew that this senior of his had burnt the muscles of his face in an experiment and was now unable to make any facial expressions.

“Magi experiments are really treacherous!” Leylin shook his head.

Leylin was rather efficient and normally finished the task Kroft gave him by noon. If there was spare time in the afternoon, he would go listen to the public lessons.

“Goodbye!” After saying goodbye to Bicky and Merlin, Leylin did not go to the Academic Area, but instead went to the Trading Post.

The Trading Post was huge, and was located beside the Mission Area. However, it was rather chaotic; many grey robed acolytes set up stalls, with an erect signboard stating the items and conditions that they wished to sell or trade.

Once in a while, a few acolytes would engage in haggling, it was extremely bustling.

“It seems like only acolytes are around. As for the Magi, they should have another area to trade in!” Leylin looked on and only saw grey robes, not a single white or black robed Magus was present.

Leylin browsed through the stalls. Some of them were set up on the floor, similar to the previous world’s street vendors, and looked to be a little dirty.

The floor stalls’ items belonged to the miscellaneous category; most of them were bows, knives, darts and so on. There were also

the fur, livers, and eyes of living organisms, and some still had traces of blood. The rest were some other items that Leylin could not identify.

As for potions, every stall with 'Potions' on its signboard had acolytes clamouring over them. The stall owners all had calm expressions and radiated strong energy waves.

According to the estimation of the A.I Chip, most of these acolytes were Level 3 Acolytes!

“As expected, the rarity of potions is above my imagination, not to mention Magic Artifacts, not a single one is on sale!

Leylin thought of Jayden, who previously used the green coloured badge. That was a low grade Magic Artifact, similar to the ring he had before.

A Level 1 Acolyte could not use any spells, but Jayden had previously subdued Kaliweir through the green badge Magic Artifact.

“Now it seems like the Magic Artifact was given to Jayden by Dorotte!”

Leylin could not help but be a little envious. He previously owned a Magic Artifact too, but unfortunately it had been broken and was used in the transaction for applying to the academy. With these conditions now, it would be extremely difficult to obtain another

one.

Leylin looked at the goods on display as he walked towards the centre of the Trading Post.

There were a few wooden huts here, and they seemed to have higher standards compared to the surroundings. The acolytes who occasionally walked in and out radiated strong energy waves.

Leylin casually walked into a shop selling potions.

“What do you need?” The shop owner was a fatty, and wore a grey robe. He looked to be a little lazy. According to the readings of the A.I Chip, he was also a Level 3 Acolyte and even carried a Magic Artifact.

“I need a set of equipment so that I can practice brewing potions!” Leylin said unhurriedly.

“Another one who is dreaming! And it’s actually a Level 1 Acolyte who wants to try brewing potions! You think you’re Merlin?” The fatty scolded him.

“Excuse me, Merlin is my senior and we have the same mentor!” Leylin replied.

“So it’s like this! It turns out you’re Kroft’s apprentice, so already brewing potions at this stage is understandable, it is understandable!” The fatty’s face seemed to be filled with spirit,

“So you’re Merlin’s junior, hello, I am Woox!”

The fatty introduced himself, and there was a cunning expression on his face, “Rather than potion brewing, if you are able to get me some of Merlin’s potions, I will give a good price for them. Of course, if they were made by Professor Kroft, it would be even better.....”

“My apologies! Professor Kroft’s potions are impossible! As for Merlin’s, I’ll give it a try!” Leylin rolled his eyes, but he did not reject him outrightly.

“Now, can you give me an introduction of the apparatus?”

“Oh! Of course! Of course!” The fatty rubbed his hands and placed a few sets of glass apparatus on the wooden table.

“There is all of this! They are second hand, but they are still usable. I recommend this set; it’s from a Level 3 Acolyte that did not want it anymore!”

The fatty took out an apparatus set which included beakers, a glass rod, a petri dish, test tubes, and a set of pale yellow tools. It seemed rather complete.

Leylin examined the equipment with his hands.

According to the analysis of the A.I Chip, the quality of this apparatus set was average, but it was enough for him to use.

“I’ll take this one then! How many Magic Crystals?” Leylin asked.

“Two pieces!” The fatty replied.

“Wrap it well for me!” Leylin handed the two Magic Crystals over to the fatty. Fatty received them, and packaged the set before handing it over to Leylin.

“Do you have any elementary potion formulas?” Leylin placed the bundle on his back, and asked again.

“Yes! I have formulas for Strength Potions, Hemostatic Potions, and Bug Removal Potions, which one do you want?”

“The Strength Potion!” These were all elementary potion formulas, so Leylin simply picked one.

“Give me a set of ingredients as well!”

Chapter 26: Starting Attempts

The fatty Woon took out a black coloured box from a shelf behind him and placed it on the table. He also took out a sheet of parchment from under the sales counter. It seemed to be extremely old, with the ends a little torn.

“One copy of the Strength Potion formula, one Magic Crystal!”

“One set of ingredients, enough for ten tries, one Magic Crystal!”

Leylin opened the black coloured box. Inside were ten crimson-coloured fruits arranged neatly, which seemed to have traces of cracks on their surface, and beside them was a root of some green plant, and a bottle of black powder.

Putting the box away and picking up the faint yellowish parchment paper, he saw a formula written in black ink, which even included the areas to note. Although the handwriting was a little faded, it was still legible as a whole.

Leylin nodded his head and tucked the parchment paper into his robes. He took out the last 2 Magic Crystals he had in his waist pouch and handed it to Woon, then left the hut without turning back.

He only had 4 Magic Crystals and had spent them all on this small amount of ingredients. This terrifying expenditure for potion brewing was not something the average acolyte could bear.

What followed next was that Leylin's daily routine had taken a similar route to how he had been in his previous world.

Every day, he was shuttling to and fro between five places: the dorm, the dining hall, the Academic Area, the experiment lab and the library.

Another month passed unknowingly.

[The gathering of data has been completed!]

The A.I Chip's notification sounded.

Sitting on one side of a long table in the library, Leylin closed the book he was holding in his hands.

Apart from attending classes and aiding his mentor with his experiments, the majority of his time was spent in the library. Almost every book that could be read for free was browsed through, and the A.I Chip finished accumulating more data.

“Whew..... I have finally understood the formulation of potions!” Leylin exhaled loudly.

Although Kroft had provided some elementary information

about Potioneering, there were many things that he still did not understand. He learnt things like the terminology and vocabulary by himself in the library. If he wanted a professor's explanation he would have had to pay a fee. However, it was a pity that Leylin had turned into a peasant with 0 Magic Crystals.

Many acolytes who were embarrassingly short of Magic Crystals did the same thing, browsing through the variety of free information in the library. However, they did not have Leylin's A.I Chip, so they usually needed a dozen days to a month to find what they wanted in the library.

As for Leylin, he had now recorded all the information that was available to him in the library already. He even made a search function for it, so the information would be at his perusal if he met with any questions in the future.

However, even Elementary Potioneering was considered higher-tiered information. Even with the constant analyses from the A.I Chip, Leylin only knew about one-third of it, but that was already extremely useful to him.

At least now, when he looked back upon the basics of Potioneering, it was like looking down at the tiles from the roof of a tall building.

As for the elementary potion brewing and the Strength Potion formula, they had been fully analysed, so it was time to put them into practice.

“My accumulation of knowledge is already enough, I’ll begin brewing the Strength Potion today!”

Leylin placed the books back on the shelves and left the library.

A female acolyte with brunette hair raised her head and glanced at Leylin, before returning her attention to the black book in her hands.

The library had many acolytes, and yet they were all well behaved and extremely quiet. It was very suitable for reading, and one of Leylin’s favourite hangouts.

“Hey! Leylin!”

When he walked out of the library, an acolyte greeted him. Leylin raised his head, “Ryan! Kaliweir!”

Kaliweir wore the grey robes of an acolyte, and his original haughtiness had lessened, “Congratulations on becoming a Level 1 Acolyte!”

“Thank you, congratulations to you too!” Leylin replied with a smile.

He too had sensed that Kaliweir had turned into a Level 1 Acolyte.

“The few of us in the clique have already turned into Level 1

Acolytes!” Kaliweir stressed the first few words and seemed to have automatically excluded Guricha and the others.

“We have taken up a few missions recently, do you have any interest in joining us?” Kaliweir asked.

Kaliweir seemed to be trying hard to maintain the previous group of friends.

“Do a mission now?” Leylin’s brows furrowed, “From what I know, the area outside the academy has been getting dangerous lately, especially for those Level 1 Acolytes who do not even know any spells.....”

“There’s no choice, any high-tiered information here has to be bought, and Magic Crystals are the only form of currency! The Magic Crystals that we brought have already been spent!” Kaliweir smiled bitterly.

“If you want to be a Potions Master, the expenditure of resources will be extremely great.....”

“About taking up missions, I’ll consider it again when I have become a Level 2 Acolyte! Take care of yourselves!” Leylin eventually declined. The rewards for completing missions were extremely alluring, but one needed to risk their life to claim them.

“Alright then! I heard that you are earning Magic Crystals by giving tuition to others. Could you also teach us, it can be in

accordance to your rates!”

After hearing that Leylin was unwilling to go, Kaliweir felt a little dejected, but he continued to ask.

“Definitely, it’ll be my pleasure. I can even give you guys favourable rates!” Leylin smiled lightly, exchanging benefits was always the norm for Magi.

Both sides decided on the location and date, and then Kaliweir and his party left after that.

Seeing their departing figures, Leylin’s eyes flashed, “He is still roping people in? What a pity, Kaliweir has still not understood that in the world of Magi, one’s own strength holds the most importance!”

Shaking his head, he returned to his dorm.

Every acolyte in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had a dorm of their own, so secrecy and safety were not an issue.

Leylin locked the door and hung up a ‘Do Not Disturb’ sign, only then did he return to the room beside the bedroom.

A large black coloured table occupied the room, and Leylin’s previously bought apparatus set had been placed on it.

“After a few attempts at practicing, I am now a little more familiar with these apparatus, and I finished analysing the formula for the Strength Potion today, so it’s about time to start!”

Leylin muttered to himself and took out the black box containing the ingredients. He placed it on the table and opened it.

The crimson fruit, green stem and bottle of black powder appeared before his eyes.

Leylin’s fingers stroked the surfaces of these 3 items, “A.I Chip! Measure the activity within and establish a model!”

[Establishing scan, in the midst of gathering data, beginning construction!]

“Begin the simulation of the experiment!” Seeing the A.I Chip complete its task, Leylin gave it another command.

[Simulation of model in process..... Strength Potion Formula..... Estimated time consumed: 2 hours 21 minutes!]

“As expected, it’s possible!” Leylin smiled jubilantly.

Even for identical ingredients, the slightest deviation would

result in different results when making the potion.

As for qualified Potions Masters, they must make use of their experience and put the theory into practice, then make adjustments to obtain the desired properties of the potion.

This field only relied on raw talent and the future accumulation of experience.

As for the A.I Chip, it was able to scan and produce simulations, resulting in a success rate that was much higher than for many other acolytes.

Leylin patiently waited for some time, and then heard the A.I Chip's voice,

[The simulation of the model is completed, success rate: 23.6%]

“A success rate close to one-quarter?” Leylin was in ecstasy.

“A regular acolyte will always fail on their first attempt at brewing potions. As for me, I'll be able to have a one in four chance of success if I follow the A.I Chip's instructions?”

“Begin transmitting the process for the experiment!”

[Beginning the transmission of data!]

A few images flashed by Leylin's eyes as if he had already practiced making these potions countless of times. Various scenarios and their suitable responses, as well as the preparation of ingredients, were all presented in front of him.

“It's time to start!”

Leylin's expression turned solemn, and he picked up a crimson fruit, “This is a Blood Vitality Fruit and it contains a huge amount of nourishment if it was prepared in an antidote.....”

Leylin placed the Blood Vitality Fruit into a white basin. He picked up a pounding tool and smashed the fruit into a pulp. The red juices flowed out, and an alcoholic scent was emitted from it.

After filtering out the mashed Blood Vitality Fruit, Leylin poured the red juice into a beaker.

After the black candlestick had been lit, light blue flames continuously lapped at the bottom of the beaker. Within minutes, the red juice in the beaker started to boil, and a few flecks of black powder constantly jumped about in the bubbles.

Leylin picked up the glass rod beside him, and stirred the

contents of the beaker.

“Marliwoosha!” Leylin chanted.

A thread of Spiritual Force travelled through the glass rod and entered the bubbling liquid, and a few wisps of black gas continued to be produced. It was the poison inside the Blood Vitality Fruit.

This was why only a Level 1 Acolyte and above could start to practice making potions, as a few steps required the usage of energy particles.

After all of the black gaseous substance were expelled, Leylin placed the liquid, which was even more crimson than before, into a test tube.

“The first step is completed! The degree of purification isn’t bad!”

“The next part should be the stem of the Silk Fruit.....”

What Leylin did next was to prepare the rest of the Blood Vitality Fruit and Silk Fruit together. He failed somewhere in the middle for a few times, and finally succeeded after making the 8th batch of the crimson liquid and the 7th batch of the frozen green substance.

“The next step should be the final blending process!”

Leylin placed the contents of the frozen green substance onto a petri dish, took out the black powder from the glass bottle, and sprinkled it on top.

The black powder caused a strong reaction after coming into contact with the frozen green substance. The frozen green substance continued to swell and let out a humming noise.

“Ice!” Leylin muttered an incantation in the Byrn language.

White mist suddenly appeared from the petri dish, condensing into a layer of ice and solidifying the frozen green substance yet again.

“It is time!” Leylin placed the frozen lump into a beaker, where a flame blazed continuously underneath the beaker.

“The final step!” Leylin’s eyes widened, and he poured the purified crimson liquid into the beaker.

A thread of his Spiritual Force also continuously extended into the beaker.

“Pa!” A sound suddenly came from the beaker, the frozen lump and the red liquid suddenly turned black, and a sickening stench emitted from it.

“Have I failed?” Leylin was indifferent.

“A.I Chip, analyse the reason!”

[Beep! In the process of analysing.....Conclusion: The Host's Spiritual Force was unstable, and the temperature of the flames caused some distortion.....]

The A.I Chip replayed Leylin's earlier actions and revealed the reason for failure.

Chapter 27: Successful Potion Brewing

Leylin dumped the failed experiment residue into the bin and inhaled deeply.

“Again!”

The same process was repeated, and finally, the purified crimson liquid from the Blood Vitality Fruit was poured into the beaker.

This time, Leylin shifted all his concentration onto the beaker and continued to adjust the temperature of the flame below it.

The red liquid and the frozen green substance continued to merge together, turning a faint yellowish colour.

“Green life, Blood red vitality. Under the interference of the willpower from the depths of the abyss, you shall fuse! Furikesha Keleyahsan.....”

Leylin chanted the final phase of the incantation.

The various colours in the beaker continued to fuse together as he chanted. The substance finally turned into a faint blue colour liquid and emitted a fragrant and alluring scent.

“It’s completed! I successfully brewed the Strength Potion!”

Leylin smiled lightly, and poured the light blue liquid into a tiny test tube.

“The liquid in this finger-length test tube can provide the nourishment that a person needs for 7 days, and also ensure that the person’s physical body and mental energy will be vigorous. It is a favourite for people who work on long experiments and adventurers! The normal price is 5 Magic Crystals!”

Leylin shook the test tube, and the potion inside glowed enchantingly under the light.

One night passed, Leylin looked at the three light blue test tubes that he held absentmindedly.

“With ten sets of ingredients, I succeeded three times and obtained three potions!

“This news definitely cannot be leaked out; otherwise I will not be able to explain myself!” Leylin resolved, and destroyed the three test tubes containing the potions.

“What a pity!” Leylin was a little heartbroken.

“These 3 potions are worth 15 Magic Crystals, but the production cost is only 1 Magic Crystal. This potion industry has a crazy profit margin of over a dozen times its cost!!!”

“But I’m unable to sell them now! Aaarghhh!!” Leylin was rather

exasperated.

“Not only can I not sell the potions, I still need to earn money to buy ingredients to continue my experiments and put on a façade of failure. I can only sell the most basic of potions after half a year!”

This estimate was based on Merlin’s success rate. He did not want to stand out and attract too much attention. Hence, he had to perform a little worse than Merlin. Merlin had a huge amount of ingredients and continuously practiced brewing back then. Only after a month did he manage to brew his first potion. Leylin did not have many Magic Crystals, so he could only show his talent in potion brewing after half a year.

He was, after all, an apprentice of the Potion’s Professor, and when he finally brewed his first potion successfully after half a year of failure, he would only be labelled as an ordinary talent as an apprentice of the Potion’s Professor, which was extremely logical.

“Potions absolutely cannot be sold in large quantities within the academy grounds, unless..... I am able to find a black market? But travelling outside the academy is too dangerous!”

Leylin shook his head, tidied up the experiment apparatus, and walked out of the room.

“This also proves that having such a high precision A.I Chip gives me a huge edge over others in tasks with troublesome details! What’s next is to continue to focus and break through to a Level 2

Acolyte!”

“After I have the ability, I will abide by this cycle of selling potions, earning Magic Crystals, and gaining knowledge.”

Leylin still needed close to a year’s time to break through to a Level 2 Acolyte, according to the calculations from the A.I Chip.

After all, it would get increasingly harder to construct the 24 mind runes as the runes multiplied, and he also needed to accumulate more knowledge.

“In this period, I can constantly gather data and finish compiling the information on Spiritual Force. This will be very useful to me in the future!”

Unknowingly, another half a year passed just like that.

A brown-haired youth lowered his head as he walked on the black tiled pavement, as if he was deep in thought.

This youth looked to be only thirteen or fourteen years of age, and had brown hair. His face was unusually pale, if it had not seen the sun for a long time.

This youth was naturally Leylin. At this moment, his right hand was hidden inside his sleeves, holding on to a test tube, and he appeared to be making some kind of choice.

“It has already been half a year since the first time I successfully brewed a potion,!” Leylin looked at the acolytes walking past him and thought to himself.

In this half a year, many things had happened within the academy. For instance Fayle achieved some great accomplishments, and Merlin managed to brew a new potion. The fame of these geniuses only increased.

However, Leylin was more concerned with the fact that Jayden had already advanced to a Level 2 Acolyte.

He recalled that when Kaliweir spoke of this news, he could not hide the fear and envy in his eyes despite trying his best to conceal it.

The aptitude, as well as advancement, of a fifth grade acolyte was extremely startling.

As a fellow acolyte who came from the same area as him, Leylin did not have much thoughts towards it. He buried himself with the work he had to do, and to an outsider, he was just an ordinary Level 1 Acolyte.

In this half year, Leylin had bought many of the Strength Potion ingredients and conducted many potion-brewing sessions. He also invested all of the profit he earned from giving tuition into this potion making. He also put up a front to conceal the A.I Chip and tried to brew a potion without the A.I Chip’s help most of the time,

which had a success rate of zero. So far, he had spent a dozen odd Magic Crystals on this.

Of course, he also he also brought forward the problems he encountered to his mentor, Kroft, at times and asked other questions about the basics and brewing techniques. This was greatly beneficial for his Potioneering.

Secretly, Leylin could already affirm that with the help of the A.I Chip, his Potioneering skills had already surpassed Merlin, only being a little inferior to his mentor, Kroft.

Today, it would be the day he ‘accidentally’ succeeded in brewing a potion and let his mentor evaluate it.

This time, the successful product was controlled by him through the A.I Chip. He purposely made some minute errors, making it seem like an inferior product that was made by an acolyte, but it would still be considered decent for a new acolyte.

Leylin’s palm, which was gripping the potion, uncontrollably tightened.

“Only after today, can I start to sell a few potions in broad daylight and earn some Magic Crystals! Yesterday, I heard Raynor say that he already felt close to advancing. Therefore, my progress can’t lag behind too much!”

Leylin hurriedly walked into Kroft’s experiment lab.

“Leylin, do you have more problems with the brewing of the Strength Potion?” Kroft could clearly feel that his apprentice was different today.

“No, Sir!” Leylin inhaled deeply, “I have already succeeded once last night!”

“What?” The beaker in Kroft hands trembled, “Although your talent in Potioneering has exceeded my expectations, the brewing of a Strength Potion is not that easy!”

After half a year, Kroft was able to sense his apprentice’s frightening improvement after being questioned so much. However, he still felt that Leylin was still lacking in regards to brewing the Strength Potion successfully.

Hearing this, Merlin’s hand shook while he was concentrating on lowering a red crystal bead into a test tube. Black smoke emitted from the test tube and Merlin sighed, turning his attention over here.

As for Bicky, she just leaned over directly.

“Did you bring the completed potion?” Kroft asked.

“It’s in here!” Leylin took out a blue-coloured test tube and handed it to the professor.

Kroft unplugged the wooden stopper and took a sniff. His face revealed a startled expression.

He then poured a drop on his finger. A fine, milky-white light extended from between his brows and directly pierced the droplet, making it shake.

Kroft closed his eyes, his brows furrowed and soon relaxed.

“The purification of the Blood Vitality Fruit was not bad, but too much was added at the end. There was also some problem with your usage of Spiritual Force, which damaged the chemical properties.....All in all, there are quite a few problems, but you have succeeded as a whole! Congratulations!”

Kroft smiled jubilantly.

Hearing this, Leylin also smiled, and Bicky even cheered, giving Leylin a warm hug.

The fiery hot curves of this girl attached themselves onto Leylin's chest, which gave rise to a peculiar feeling in his heart.

“Congratulations!” Merlin walked over too.

“Compared to Senior Merlin, I still have much to learn!” Leylin let go of Bicky, and hurriedly said.

“You don’t have to be too humble, compared to Merlin, your resources are lacking. I guarantee that you would have been able to brew your first potion in 3 to 4 months otherwise. In Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, this talent can already be considered excellent!” Kroft exclaimed.

“Thinking back now, I am really lucky. First, I accepted Merlin, who has talent in Potioneering, as my apprentice. And now, I have you!” Kroft exclaimed.

“Sir, I will also work hard!” Bicky clenched her small fists and returned to her experiment table.

“Finish preparing the Monkey Headed Mushrooms in your hands first, before you say anything else!” Kroft’s face turned stiff.

After that, he returned the Strength Potion to Leylin, “This time, luck played an important factor in brewing the Strength Potion. What you have to do next is to remember how it felt when you first succeeded, and then practice more. This test tube can also be sold and exchanged for more resources!”

Kroft seemed to be reminding him, “Leylin, you must remember. Different potions have different challenges for Potioneering Masters. Although you are able to brew this Strength Potion right now, you would most likely revert back to a newbie if you were to replace it with a Hemostatic Potion. Therefore, do not be arrogant. From now on, focus on practicing your potion brewing!”

“I will!” Leylin pocketed the Strength Potion well, and promised

solemnly.

After he finished his tasks in the experiment lab, Leylin left together with Bicky.

“Shall we go to the second level dining hall to feast, to commemorate your first success?” Bicky ran in front and twirled around a few times, as if she was a lively butterfly.

“Of course! It is my honour to invite a beautiful lady to a meal!” Leylin bowed slightly, a gentleman’s propriety.

“Hehe!” Bicky covered her mouth and laughed adorably, and then her expression darkened, “If only.....If only he was like you.....”

“What’s wrong? Your Senior Fayle is ignoring you again?”

Leylin knew a little about this matter. In this half year, Bicky gradually got closer to Fayle and finally became friends with him, but they were only normal friends.

As for Fayle, he was constantly studying and practicing, and taking risks outside the academy. He was always surrounded by beautiful girls, so he did not think much of Bicky and was a little standoffish.

“It’s not that! Fayle just has a very important experiment coming up and is in the midst of collecting resources, so he’s very

busy.....” Bicky lowered her head and kicked a pebble off the sidewalk.

Chapter 28: For Sale

“Something’s not right!” A thought suddenly occurred to Leylin.

“You..... Could you have given him your family’s resources? No wonder you are still a Level 1 Acolyte! Otherwise, with your aptitude, you should have advanced to the next level long ago!”

Bicky belonged to a small Magus Family. Although small in size, they were still capable of obtaining the occasional resources and Magic Crystals. As for Bicky, the one whom the family placed all its hopes on, she was naturally given a fixed share each month.

Her aptitude was not bad, and she had arrived earlier than Leylin by a year. By right, she should have been promoted to a Level 2 Acolyte long ago. However, she was still a Level 1 Acolyte, and even Leylin had nearly caught up to her.

“It’s.....It’s not like that!” Bicky hurriedly shook her head.

Seeing Bicky’s expression, Leylin slowly shook his head. “Forget it! I can’t really do anything for you regarding this matter... However, you must remember to be more careful!”

Leylin hinted.

“Alright! Let’s go to the dining hall on the second floor!! I hear that the honey-flavoured cake there isn’t bad.....” Bicky smiled, and it was obvious she did not want to talk about this topic

anymore.

The second level dining hall was a special place. Contrary to the third level cafeteria where the food was served for free, the service here had to be paid for in Magic Crystals.

It was the first time Leylin had come here. After ordering two honey-flavoured cakes, a beef steak, two fruit juices, and the flesh of a Uni-horned Lizard, the total came up to 1 Magic Crystal and made Leylin feel a pang in his heart.

“I’ve heard that if the flesh of these lizards is specially prepared, it is very beneficial for a Magus’s meditation, so I must try it today!”

Leylin used a knife to slice off a part of the lizard meat, picked the meat up with a fork, and placed it into his mouth. He instantly felt the fragrant flavour of the meat spread throughout his taste buds, and Leylin’s eyes lit up in wonderment.

[Beep! An ingredient with a beneficial effect on the Host’s body has been detected! Result: Mild increase in meditation. Hint: requires 10 continuous days of consumption for an obvious increase in effect!]

“I..... “ Leylin was speechless. “It’s such a splendid item, but how could I have that many Magic Crystals? I can only eat it for its flavour!”

On the other side, Bicky was very happily eating the honey-flavoured cake.

After their meal, Leylin bade farewell to Bicky and went to the Trading Post.

Leylin had very few Magic Crystals to begin with, but now he planned to sell the Strength Potion. With Kroft's approval, he could earn Magic Crystals by brewing and selling more Strength Potions.

After walking past the chaotic stalls, Leylin arrived at Woox's stall, the stall he had bought potion ingredients from during his first visit to this place.

"Leylin! It's you again! You have spent dozens of Magic Crystals this half year! Haven't you given up yet?" Woox was still as fat as ever.

"Potioneering is such an enchanting skill, I cannot bear to give it up!" Leylin said, half-jokingly.

"However, today I am here not just to buy ingredients," Leylin said as he handed the Strength Potion over to fatty Woox, "Look at this!"

"This is....." Woox gaped, "You've succeeded?"

“Of course!” Leylin smiled lightly.

What Woox did next was to make a thorough inspection, and after ensuring that it was indeed an authentic Strength Potion, his eyes almost seemed to glow.

“Over a hundred times! You have only attempted it around a hundred times and yet you’ve succeeded in brewing a Strength Potion! This talent.....This talent is only slightly inferior to Merlin’s!”

Most of the ingredients were sold to Leylin by Woox, so he was able to deduce Leylin’s talent very quickly.

“As if! This is due to Mentor Kroft’s guidance!” Leylin said bashfully.

“Oh! It’s Kroft again, he already has such a talented student like Merlin, why did they send yet another gifted student to him?”

The fatty slapped his forehead and let out a shrill voice, “Why don’t you consider changing mentors? My mentor, Wranke, is also a professor who is adept in Potioneering.....He will definitely like you!”

“My apologies! I have never considered changing at all!” Leylin hurriedly rejected the offer. Kroft treated him rather well, and he would surely incur the wrath of the Magus if he changed mentors on a whim. He simply did not want to take that risk.

“What a pity.....” The fatty shook his head, he clearly knew that he had been grasping at straws.

“Alright! I will be able to give you 4 Magic Crystals for this Strength Potion, how about it?” The fatty asked.

Although the Strength Potion was priced at 5 Magic Crystals, 4 Magic Crystals was a reasonable price when considering the profit that was to be made by the stall.

“It’s a fair deal, exchange the Magic Crystals for more ingredients for the Strength Potion!”

“Alright! If you wish to sell any more Strength Potions in the future, I will buy them all at the price of 4 Magic Crystals per potion!” Woox’s eyes flashed.

An acolyte with a Potioneering talent that was slightly lower than Merlin’s was akin to a Magic Crystal mine that had yet to be excavated.

“Definitely! To a good partnership!”

Leylin and Woox shook hands, and after collecting four black boxes, he walked out from the hut.

“Look quickly! Fresh Mountain Cat eyeballs! This is an item that

will greatly benefit your meditation!’

“Exquisite cross blades, as well as military crossbows. All imported from the Deep Blue Kingdom!”

“Feathers of a flamingo! A precious ingredient for experiments, only 5 Magic Crystals!’

Here and there, various acolytes were promoting their wares. Leylin saw a black-robed acolyte holding up a huge 5 coloured feather and advertising continuously, which obviously attracted a huge crowd.

“A.I Chip! Scan the feather!”

[Beep! Comparing to databank! Similarity level: Mynah’s tail feathers 83%, homegrown peacock 64%, sharp-beaked crane 34%]

Leylin looked at the acolyte who was still advertising his goods and was speechless. Flamingo feathers are rare, but the 3 bird feathers that the A.I Chip detected were so common that acolytes wouldn’t bother to pick them up if they fell to the ground. Obviously, it was a scam.

This situation was rather common in such stalls. Although goods are rather good, the counterfeit goods are also aplenty. Hence,

Leylin always bought from the wooden huts in the centre area.

Moreover, acolytes are sharp, and the chances of finding a cheap yet good item in the stalls and striking big are the same as finding the remnants of dead Magi.

Leylin shook his head and left the Trading Post.

Three days later, Leylin was in his dorm, looking at sixteen test tube lined up properly on his table, deep in thought.

Right now, his success rate for brewing a Strength Potion is almost at the same level at Kroft at 40%. However, he would be seeking trouble if he were to sell them all at once!

“Right now I am only able to put on a front and earn just a little, so at most it will be 2 test tubes! As for the rest, I will have to stow them away.

Leylin sighed and placed 2 test tube in the purse hanging around his waist, and then stowed the remaining 14 test tubes in the empty space under his bed.

“I won’t be able to sell huge amounts within the academy, so I had better find some other way outside. The best scenario would be a black market; I hear prices there are higher too!”

“The outside world is dangerous; I must become a Level 2 Acolyte before going out!”

“What’s next, I can use the Magic Crystals I earned from selling potions to buy higher tiered knowledge from Kroft, and expedite my break through to Level 2 Acolyte!”

“After becoming a Level 2 Acolyte, I can attempt to practice magic spells, and take a mission outside to see if I can find ways to sell the potions.....”

Leylin pondered, and then asked, “A.I Chip, bring forth my current stats!”

[Beep! Leylin Farlier, Level 1 Acolyte. Strength: 2.1, Agility: 2.3, Vitality: 2.5, Status: Healthy]

“After such a long period of meditation, my Vitality has increased the most. As for Strength and Agility, they have increased a little too. As for my Spiritual Force?” Leylin looked at the data in front of him and his brows furrowed.

“A.I Chip, are you able to convert my Spiritual Force into data and display it?”

[Data is insufficient. Information for Spiritual Force is being collated.]

The A.I Chip replied.

“When will it be ready?” Leylin asked.

[Estimated time: 155 Days 21 Hours]

“Half a year, huh? It is close to when I advance to Level 2 Acolyte.” Leylin nodded his head, “I’m not planning to leave in this next half a year, so it’s no big deal!”

What followed next was that Leylin entered into a state of painstaking training.

Apart from aiding Kroft in his daily experiments, he was brewing potions, exchanging them for Magic Crystals, and then purchasing more information.

Besides brewing Strength Potions, he also bought the formulas for the Hemostasis Potion and some low leveled antidotes, and began to practice brewing them.

With the A.I Chip, the success rate was not bad, but this fact was concealed by Leylin.

During this period, Leylin also heard some bad news - Kaliweir’s team had met with trouble on a mission. Not only had some been injured, others had also died. The acolyte who came with him in

the same Dirigible, third-grade acolyte Hank, would forever be buried in the Abyssal Bone Marsh.

Leylin was expecting a similar result, as a Level 1 Acolyte only has a small resistance to magic. It would be abnormal if they risked their lives and was free of injuries or loss of lives.

After this incident, Kaliweir and his team seemed to face reality and started to be content with studying in the academy, not daring to take on any other missions.

In the blink of an eye, Leylin grew a little taller and his face acquired a tinge of maturity.

“I am finally 14 too!” Seeing that his palms had grown a little larger, he felt deeply moved.

The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy seemed to have a spell formation regulating the temperature. Leylin always wore the grey robe for acolytes, but he never felt any stifling heat or frigidness.

“Sir! I want to purchase the crystal ball with the magic spell formulas!”

Leylin stood in front of Kroft.

“Oh! You want to begin learning Rank 0 spells?” Kroft cusped the porcelain cup that was emitting steam and heat in his hand, and sipped from it.

“I have nearly finished constructing my mind runes, and there’s only one more step needed before I advance to a Level 2 Acolyte. I wish to make some preparations for this beforehand!”

Leylin said warmly.

“Being able to progress in both Potioneering and also meditation, I am very gratified!” Kroft said, as he stole a glance at Bicky who was nearby.

Bicky had only advanced into a Level 2 Acolyte two days ago, and never exhibited any extraordinary talents towards Potioneering. With her aptitude, this could be considered a slow pace.

“The academy price for the basic model of magic spells is 30 Magic Crystals, I am able to give you a discount to 20 Magic Crystals!”

“Although I could also give you this information for free, I want you to know that you will only achieve results with effort!”

Kroft smiled lightly. This was the authority of the professors. They could give students favourable prices, or even give the information free of charge. It all depended on the mood of the professor. From this, it was obvious that Kroft approved of Leylin.

Chapter 29: Rank o Spell

“Of course! I will always remember the teachings of my mentor!”

Leylin hurriedly nodded his head and took out 20 Magic Crystals from the black pouch hung on his waist.

20 black Magic Crystals fell onto the table and let off a dark luster.

“Very well! This is a crystal ball with the basic model of magic spells recorded on it. You can study it, but remember to only practice it after you have been promoted!”

Kroft took a fist sized crystal ball off the wooden shelf at the side and handed it to Leylin. Golden words seemed to ripple inside it.

Leylin stooped over to take it, and pocketed the crystal ball.

These crystal balls were tools to record information in, and they could store more information than sheets of parchment. However, they could only be used once, and the information inside would fade away after someone viewed the contents, and hence, they were rather costly.

Deep in the night, Leylin sat on the bed within his dorm and held the crystal ball in his hands.

“Magi have named the spells that acolytes are able to cast Rank 0 spells, to differentiate from the spells that Magi can cast.

“No matter if they are a Level 2 Acolyte or Level 3 Acolyte, they are only able to use Rank 0 spells! Furthermore, they need to be first class Magi to be able to cast them without injury, and this is often a sign of becoming an official Magus!”

“The principle of magic spells models is to construct a model in your mind with your Spiritual Force. After that, you use the nature of your Spiritual Force to attract the external energy particles and transform them intricately, turning them into a spell!”

“To put it simply, the Spiritual Force is the primer, and the spell model is the catalyst. The primer is always the same, but under the effect of different catalysts, different types of energy particles will be attracted to it to form a different spell!”

Leylin concluded, and put the crystal ball away.

“Constructing a spell model is a complicated matter. In addition, your Spiritual Force will be impaired once you fail and will need at least half a month to recover. This is a bottleneck that even fifth grade acolytes are unable to breakthrough with ease. However, I can minimise my failures with help from the A.I Chip!”

“After advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte, I must construct a spell model and even buy the various spell models. This would be a big expense if not for my improvement in Potioneering; normal acolytes would have to risk their lives many times over before they

earned enough Magic Crystals!”

From this, Leylin could discern the bloody price one must pay on the path of a Magus.

Compared to the Magic Crystals earned by risking his life as a Level 1 Acolyte, he would earn more by selling potions.

“Monopolising the market will yield the greatest profits!”

“All these are none of my concern, what I have to do now is to advance to a Level 2 Acolyte!”

A Level 1 Acolyte could only store a slight amount of energy particles in their body and have a basic magic resistance. However, their usage of energy particles is rather shallow, and hence they are unable to cast magic.

As for a Level 2 Acolyte, the greatest difference is that they are able to cast Rank 0 spells.

A Rank 0 spell that is amplified by the spell’s model will have a greater destructive effect compared to the simple usage of energy particles.

“I have almost finished with the construction of my 24 mind runes. Tonight, I will advance to a Level 2 Acolyte!”

There was resolve on Leylin's face.

One night passed.

In the dorm, Leylin opened his eyes.

“I have finally advanced to a Level 2 Acolyte! I can sense that the energy particles in my body have increased several times more than when compared to a Level 1 Acolyte!”

[Beep! Spiritual Force can now be represented in figures, proceed with conversion?]

At this moment, the voice of the A.I Chip sounded.

“Hm? It seems to be two days faster than expected! What happened?”

[The Spiritual Force of the Host has increased and there is an unknown effect on the A.I Chip. Processing speed has increased!]

A screen was projected by the A.I Chip, and it was littered with many curved lines and numbers. From this, one could see that the processing ability of the A.I Chip had been raised last night.

“It seems like the A.I Chip has indeed undergone some qualitative changes after transcending worlds. Now that it has fused with my soul, the increase in Spiritual Force when my soul became more powerful has indirectly affected the A.I Chip!”

Leylin’s guessed that the subject of souls was the most unfathomable. Although Abyssal Bone Forest Academy claimed to be a pioneer in this area, they only managed to experience and grasp a few behaviours and patterns of the ectoplasmic beings. Moreover, only an official Magus was qualified to browse this information. For Leylin, it was still a long journey ahead.

“My A.I Chip having the ability to represent my Spiritual Force in numbers is also a good thing. Bring out my current stats!”

[Leylin Farlier, Level 2 Acolyte. Strength: 2.2, Agility: 2.4, Vitality: 2.7, Spiritual Force: 4.1, Status: Healthy]

The A.I Chip projected a 3D image in front of Leylin eyes and displayed his stats.

“The Spiritual Force can finally be shown in numbers. My Spiritual Force stat is almost equivalent to that of 4 people combined?”

Leylin looked at the image and asked, “A.I Chip! Investigate the reason for the decreased growth after advancing to a Level 2

Acolyte!”

[Mission establishing, inspection in process!]

[Reason discovered: The Host has more resistance!]

The A.I Chip’s voice sounded.

“As expected! Using radiation to increase my stats has its limits! I wonder what methods those official Magi used to strengthen their bodies?”

Leylin touched his chin.

There was also a small district between the Academic Area and the Trading Post. It was where the academy sold higher-levelled goods. Although the items had set standards, they were more expensive. The service of the staff was also bad and they were extremely cold.

Leylin came to the front of a counter. Behind the glass casing was a grave looking old lady who wore a deadpanned expression as if Leylin owed her a lot of Magic Crystals.

“Sorry to bother you!” Leylin bowed slightly. He could sense the

energy waves of a Level 3 Acolyte radiating from this old lady.

“A.I Chip! Inspect!”

“What do you want?” The old lady’s voice sounded. It contained a gloomy and chilly air, like a cold, glossy fish scale, and gave people goose bumps.

[Beep! Name: Unknown. Strength: 2.0, Agility: 2.1, Vitality: 3.5, Spiritual Force: 7.6, Status: Healthy]

With the A.I Chip providing the information, he confirmed that this old lady was indeed a Level 3 Acolyte, but her Spiritual Force was rather low, as if she had been injured before. However, it was still a piece of cake for her to deal with Leylin.

“The A.I Chip can already inspect the stats of the acolytes and other living organisms. It just cannot get past the defensive abilities of a Magus still!”

Leylin mustered the best smile he had, “Would you let me have a look at the basic spell models?”

“Take it!” The old lady flung a dusty large book over to him and did not seem even slightly bothered about whether he was going to buy it or not.

“I’m not angry! I’m not angry!” Leylin psyched himself and opened the book.

A spell model and the corresponding introduction appeared in his vision.

“Secondary Energy Fireball. Description: Summon a formidable fireball to attack your enemies. Prerequisite courses: Foundations of Negative Energy, Construction of Spell Models.”

“Shadow Sphere. Description: Use Shadow Energy to construct a fairly covert sphere. Prerequisite courses: Necromancy Studies, Transfiguration.”

“Acidic Aqua Shot. Description: Create an acidic ball with immense corrosive properties. Able to correct the trajectory slightly. Prerequisite courses: Foundations of Negative Energy, Psychology.”

“Umbra’s Hand. Description: Ability to use Negative Energy to form a concealed palm in the shadows for attacking. Extremely covert. Prerequisite courses: Shadow Studies, Basic Evocation.

“All of these are the most basic spells, are there any that could be advanced further?” Leylin’s brows furrowed.

“None! We only provide the basic spell types here. As for the rest, get them from your mentor!”

“Give me the spell model for Acidic Aqua Shot and Umbra’s Hand!” Leylin inhaled deeply.

“One will cost 10 Magic Crystals!” The old lady seemed to be annoyed.

After handing over 20 Magic Crystals to the lady, Leylin obtained two thick books made of parchment paper. ‘Umbra’s Hand’ was written on the cover of the top book, in the Byron language.

This counter was obviously constructed in a manner that let the sales staff always sit in a taller position than the customers. Leylin was a little pissed off at having to look up at the old lady.

He carried the two books and turned around, not wanting to stay for a moment longer.

“Leylin!” On the way back, a voice sounded and Leylin halted in his footsteps.

A male wearing leather armour ran over, “Earlier, I saw a silhouette of someone who looked like you, and it was indeed you. We haven’t met for a long time!”

Kaliweir greeted.

The leather armour he wore was rather damaged and looked rather pitiful as it was not repaired.

“You are..... Buying spell models? Have you advanced to a Level 2 Acolyte?” Kaliweir looked at Leylin who was holding the two spell books, seemingly startled.

“Yeah! I have just advanced! So I bought them to learn from!” Leylin answered.

“A.I Chip, inspect Kaliweir!”

[Beep! Kaliweir. Strength: 2.6, Agility: 2.8, Vitality: 3.1, Spiritual Force: 4.1, Assessment: Level 2 Acolyte]

“It seems like Kaliweir advanced not long before I did, this data shows the stats of an acolyte who had just advanced!”

Leylin evaluated secretly.

Ever since the previous incident, our team has taken up very few missions. Raynor has also advanced to a Level 2 Acolyte recently and wanted to try learning a spell model. It’s a pity that he has yet to pass a few basic theory lessons after failing them several times.....”

Kaliweir placed his hands in his pocket, obviously wanting to look cooler.

After sizing up Leylin's new grey robes, he said, "You are indeed worthy of being a Potioneering student, having so much money!"

Leylin smiled. Not only do the grey robes of the acolytes have spells which remove stains, the fabric was also good. The defensive capabilities could be comparable to leather armour so the price was rather hefty. Many acolytes did not have the capability to buy another after damaging their set of robes.

However, Leylin was different; he even had two more sets stored in his wardrobe.

Recently, my success rate has increased a little and I earned more Magic Crystals. However, after buying the spell models, I have spent them all again!" Leylin put on a helpless expression.

"Yeah! Each and every cost in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is too high!" Kaliweir's expression was not too good. He came from a first-class noble family in the Chernobyl Islands, but he discovered he was actually extremely broke when he got here.

"Speaking of this, after we have all advanced to Level 2 Acolytes and mastered our spells, shall we all take up a mission?"

Leylin asked.

"Really? That would be great!" Kaliweir was extremely gleeful. It seemed as though he had been considering it for a long time.

Chapter 30: Experimenting With Spells

Leylin and Kaliweir discussed the finer details and then bade farewell to each other.

Leylin contemplated deeply before deciding to go on a mission with Kaliweir and his team.

He still had a lot of potions which he did not dare to sell, so he could only seek for alternatives.

Moreover, converting the knowledge gained from learning a spell into battle experience requires a continuous process of battling.

Regarding battle experience, Kaliweir and his team's average strength were similar to his and they also came from the same region. Everyone also knew each other beforehand which was naturally better than being with an unfamiliar group of people.

Furthermore, Kaliweir has undergone a long period of arduous training and has learnt a lot. Since he could be considered to have an abundant of experience, Leylin was more at ease with his team.

“When I master the spell model, my plan is to follow Kaliweir and his team on a mission and accumulate some experience. After that, I'll leave the academy on my own and seek alternative ways.....”

Returning back to his dorm, Leylin picked up the Umbra's Hand

spell book.

The yellow cover of the spell book was extremely sturdy like leather, and there were some patterns on it which sent an icy cold feeling from Leylin's fingertips into his body.

The book was tightly bound by a metal chain and the ends were clipped in the fashion of a belt.

“Learning the Umbra's Hand requires research in Shadow energy and Evocation. I've learned both long ago!”

Via selling potions, Leylin continuously improved his knowledge by acquiring advanced information on the Shadow element and studying them.

“The incantation for opening it - Mansidala!” Leylin spoke in a low voice.

After hearing the incantation, the book suddenly trembled and, amidst the trembling, the black chains automatically untied by themselves and the pages started to flip through.

“A.I Chip, begin recording the information!”

Leylin continuously looked at the spell book containing the model of Umbra's Hand. Only after quickly flipping through it once and hearing the notification from the A.I Chip that it had fully recorded the content, did he put the book down.

“The construction of a spell model is the foundation for a Magus to cast spells. This process includes a series of complex variation as well as the precise construction of the spell model itself. To learn a spell, 3 months is needed at the very least!”

As he learned of the difficulty for a Magus to cast spells, Leylin sighed. Without the A.I Chip, he could only learn to cast spells after countless attempts and failures.

[The recording of data is finished, beginning analysis!]

The A.I Chip’s voice sounded.

“How long will it take?”

[Estimated time taken: 106 Hours 32 Minutes!]

“106 Hours 32 Minutes! That is the equivalent of four to five days, this speed is extremely fast!” Leylin nodded his head.

He stood up, patted his body, and placed the two spell books away neatly.

He then walked to one side of his dorm. Originally, this section was utilized for reception or other uses but Leylin changed it into a mini experiment lab for potion brewing.

Although it was rather dangerous to experiment here, with the A.I Chip he could guarantee that nothing would go wrong.

“I’m going on a mission in a few months’ time! I better focus on brewing a few potions as preventive measures for sudden events!”

Leylin lit a candle and begun his potion brewing.

The education system in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was rather loose. From what Leylin saw, it was most similar to the ancient times of one teacher to one student.

The academy was only providing land and the most basic of services. As for everything else, like acquiring advanced information, one had to learn from a professor, the chances of which were very slim.

Moreover, there weren’t any compulsory missions that one must take on. As long as a person could pay the school fees and did not meet a bad professor, one could normally stay here for 5 years!

Of course, when there was no motivation, one’s power would lessen as they did not seek to improve. At least in Leylin’s case, he had not come across such a wonderful thing like receiving a few pieces of Magic Crystals each month for free.

To obtain Magic Crystals, one could only take up a mission and go outside of the academy using their life to fight for them!

The world of Magus has always upheld the principles of fair trade.

In the following dozen days or so, Leylin devoted his time to analyzing the spell models and purchasing items like grains and nutrients for the mission he was going to take up.

One afternoon, Leylin came to the Spell Experimenting Area.

“The Spell Experimenting Area is a place that the academy has specially set up for acolytes and Magi to test the prowess of their spells. After all, various spells have immense might and there is also the problem of radiation. If the experiments are not managed properly the academy will be blown to bits!”

The Spell Experimenting Area was located on the left-most of the academy, a remote area.

The surrounding white marble rock walls were stacked neatly and seemed to be extremely sturdy.

Various runes were written on these walls, two of which Leylin recognized. One was for the isolation of radiation contamination, and the other was for reinforcing the walls.

“Are you going to test your spells?” Leylin walked to a counter where a big, bald guy smiled jovially at him asking.

“Yes, I would like to. Are there any places for me to do so?”

“We have two large areas designated for the acolytes and Magi. You are only allowed to enter the area for acolytes and, within that area, space is divided into shared and single rooms. Shared rooms mean experimenting with your spells alongside another person. There might be interruptions caused by this but, it is inexpensive. As for single rooms, the fees are much more costly!”

“What are the rates for a single room?” Leylin asked.

The baldy’s eyes shone since it was obvious that there was a promising client here, “Three hours for 1 Magic Crystal. Our single rooms even have specialised measuring devices which can calculate and report the might of your spells. Furthermore, we have..... It’s absolutely worth it!”

“Give me one!” Leylin handed over a Magic Crystal to the big guy.

“Alright! Please hold on!” The big guy registered him quickly and handed back a black crystal-like item.

“This is your room card! Number 32!”

Leylin nodded his head and entered the Spell Experimenting

Area.

On both sides, the runes on the white marbles glowed with a sparkling light. Some of the rooms obviously had occupants, but there were no sounds coming out from them and only the sound of Leylin's footsteps could be heard the corridor.

“As expected! The noise isolation is really effective!”

Leylin nodded his head and, after locating his own room, swiped the black crystal on a black platform right outside the door!

Ka-cha! The door opened and a mechanical female voice sounded, “Welcome! You have three hours; please notice the allocation.....”

The interior of the room was huge! The area was similar in size to a basketball court from Leylin's previous life.

In the middle were a few human shaped targets wearing leather armour, metal armour and fur.

To the far right, there was a screen on the wall and below it was the instructions on how to operate it.

– A Magus can attack a target with a spell, and the screen will automatically record the power of the spell. -

“The facilities here are very advanced and seem to have an

intelligence of their own. However, it's a pity that it is formed by magic, a different route from what my previous world took!" Leylin exclaimed silently.

"Let's try with a physical attack first!"

Leylin's muscles on his right arm bulged as he walked to the front of a white coloured target wearing leather armour.

Bang ! Leylin moved and, with a low voice, he shouted and punched the middle of the leather armour, leaving a faint trace of an impression.

The screen on the right flickered, and a few words appeared.

"Classification: Physical Attack. Degree of power: 2. Damage to target: Minimal."

"It seems like these targets aren't made of common materials!" Leylin muttered to himself.

"Degree of power" is the official standard that Magi use to measure the extent of their might. A single unit, as a standard, is equivalent to the energy that can be completely released by 1 gram of Magic Crystal.

"This method of measurement isn't bad. A.I Chip, in the future you can increase the content regarding this area!"

[Recording is done, defragmenting in process!]

The A.I Chip's voice sounded.

“Ha!” Leylin pulled out the cross blade hanging on his waist and brought about a strong gale as he viciously cut down.

Qiang! A gap split opened on the leather armour revealing the white coloured wound beneath.

“Classification: Physical Attack. Degree of power: 3. Damage to target: Slight.”

Seeing the screen, Leylin nodded his head, “I used all my might to cut down with the cross blade earlier but it only gave this kind of damage to the target! It seems like I can put my mind at ease and learn magic!”

“A.I Chip, transmit the 2 spell models over!” After this period of continuous research, the A.I Chip had already analysed the 2 spells completely. The last step was to transmit the information into Leylin's [hippocampus](#) which would then enable him to grasp these two Rank 0 spells immediately.

[Note: Hippocampus(simplified) - Memory recall area in the brain]

[Beep! Transmitting in progress!]

With the A.I Chip's mechanical voice replying, Leylin felt a lot of memories regarding the techniques and procedures of casting these 2 spells surfacing in his mind.

Every step felt extremely familiar. It was as if they were personally practiced by him countless of times.

“Bring out the data of these 2 Rank 0 spells!”

“Acidic Aqua Shot: Rank 0 spell. Casting time: 3 seconds. Effective distance: 7 Metres. Consumption: 2 Spiritual Force, 2 Magic Power”

“Umbra's Hand: Rank 0 spell. Casting time: 4 seconds. Effective distance: 10 Metres. Consumption: 2 Spiritual Force, 2 Magic Power”

“Magic Power is the amount of energy particles that are stored within the body. It is limited by the upper limits of the Spiritual Force!”

To cast a spell, one does not only need to use their Spiritual Force as a primer but must also understand that the Magic Power within their body will be consumed as well.

Leylin suppressed his excited emotions, “A.I Chip, Record in detail my spell casting process !”

“Pandora - Graygonger!”

With the Byron language’s incantation sounding from Leylin, a ball of dark green liquid suddenly appeared at the upper area of his right hand. White bubbles continuously frothed outside of it.

“Let’s go!” Leylin flung the acidic ball in his hand and the green liquid streaked across in an arc, landing on a target wearing leather armour.

Sssii! Sssii!

The corrosion of the physical target sounded nonstop as it continuously dissolved while emitting a huge amount of white smoke. At the same time, an odor that pricks at the sense of smell wafted in all directions.

After a few seconds, the human target had been corroded, leaving only a pair of white legs behind.

“A.I Chip, estimate the degree of power!”

[Beep! Degree of power: 5]

Leylin turned to look at the screen at the right. At this moment, the words on the screen changed and a new record was shown.

“Classification: Magical Corrosive Attack. Degree of power: 5. Damage to target: Severe.”

“En! It seems like the A.I Chip and this screen have the same estimated values so I won’t need to come here in future. I should be able to estimate the degree of power in my spells with the A.I Chip.”

Leylin nodded his head and begin experimenting with another spell.

“Umbra’s Hand!”

Following Leylin’s incantation, a black coloured hand suddenly appeared under a target which wore steel armour. It grabbed the target’s throat forcefully and, with a crashing sound, the target’s head fell onto the ground.

“Classification: Energy Attack. Degree of power: 4. Damage to target: Severe.”

Chapter 31: Patrolling Mission

Seeing the evaluation on the screen, Leylin began to compare the merits and drawbacks of the two spells.

“Although the might of Acidic Aqua Shot is greater, enemies can dodge it easily. It also requires constant fine-tuning with Spiritual Force. As for Umbra’s Hand, it is a little weaker, but it’s extremely covert and is best used for a sneak attack!”

“These two spells have been chosen by me with utmost care. Not only do they satisfy my Dark elemental affinity, materials are not needed to cast them either, which is extremely convenient!”

Leylin’s eyes suddenly flashed, “A.I Chip, is it possible to optimise these two spells?”

[Beep! Affirmative! Consumption for optimisation: 19 Spiritual Force points, proceed or not?]

“Definitely not! I don’t want my Spiritual Force to be exhausted that quickly! Why does it require so much?” Leylin’s expression was a little unsightly.

[Optimising Acidic Aqua Shot requires 9 Spiritual Force points. Requires advanced information: Farl’s comprehensive collection of spells, Theory of missiles.....]

[Optimising Umbra's Hand requires 10 Spiritual Force points. Requires advanced information: Detailed Evocation Studies, Dark Energy Analysis.....]

“Alright, it seems like there is no hope for now!”

Leylin closed the screen, “Besides, a simple spell already requires 2 points of Spiritual Force. I can barely use it a few times at present!”

“A.I Chip, bring out my current stats and show it in a concrete manner!”

[Beep! Leylin Farlier, Level 2 Acolyte. Strength: 2.2, Agility: 2.4, Vitality: 2.7, Spiritual Force: 0.1(4.1), Magical Power: 0(4) - Magical Power is in synchronisation with Spiritual Force. Status: Healthy]

[Skills: Cross Blade Technique, Potioneering]

[Spells: Acidic Aqua Shot: Rank 0 spell. Casting time: 3

seconds. Effective distance: 7 Metres. Consumption: 2 Spiritual Force, 2 Magic Power]

[Umbra's Hand: Rank 0 spell. Casting time: 4 seconds. Effective distance: 10 Metres. Consumption: 2 Spiritual Force, 2 Magic Power]

At Leylin's command, a 3D image of himself was projected, with various information appearing alongside him.

"It is much clearer this way! The two spells fully consumed my Spiritual Force and Magical Power earlier, no wonder I feel a little dizzy now!" Leylin rubbed his temples as they were hurting a little.

"With this constraint of Spiritual Force and Magical Power, learning more spells is not feasible. What's left is for me to prepare a few more potions! If only I had a Magic Artifact, my strength would definitely have a significant increase....."

In the academy, the Mission Area.

There were all sorts of acolytes gathered here, and most of them had gloomy expressions. Their bodies also reeked of blood and held traces of injuries.

Occasionally, a few grey-robed acolytes who radiated strong

magical energy would carry large monsters on their backs, garnering the envy and attention of others.

In the centre of the Mission Area was a black coloured rock wall, where various missions were arranged.

Green-coloured words glowed against the black wall, and it looked a little eerie.

Among the many missions, some were written in blood red and gave off an ominous feeling. Most of the missions listed were dangerous, but the rewards were also better.

In the corner of the square, a few people stood around patiently as if they were waiting for someone.

“Leylin hasn’t arrived yet?”

Raynor crossed his arms in front of his chest, seemingly a little bored.

“It isn’t the designated time yet, what are you in a hurry for? Since he already agreed, he will definitely be here.” Kaliweir replied as he polished a black cleaver, the smooth blade stained with traces of blood.

“Leylin? Are you talking about that Potioneering acolyte, Leylin?” A green-haired girl’s eyes shone.

“It is said that his Potioneering talent is only second to Merlin. Furthermore, he has already begun to brew potions and earn a huge amount of money, why would he still want to join our team?”

“He originally came from the same area as us, so it’s only natural to join us for missions!” Raynor laughed.

“Then you guys must definitely introduce him to us later. If we are able to approach an acolyte who knows Potioneering, we might not need to risk our lives on missions in the future anymore!” A red-haired girl laughed heartily. Her body was extremely voluptuous.

Raynor’s eyes unconsciously scanned over this girl’s perky chest, and then he suddenly felt parched.

“My apologies! I’m late!”

Leylin wore leather armour with his robes on the outside, which looked a little bulky. A Cross Blade hung down on his waist, and a crossbow was slung on his back together with a large black sack.

“We have just arrived too!” Kaliweir sheathed his cleaver and smiled.

“It’s just us five?” Leylin looked at the group. He recognised Kaliweir and Raynor, but did not see Beirut and the rest.

“Beirut and the others are third-grade acolytes, but they have not advanced to Level 2 Acolyte yet. They only have a bit of resistance to magic spells, so the outside is too dangerous for them. This is also our first time going out after the previous failure and I don’t wish for any more casualties!”

Kaliweir explained.

Leylin suddenly understood. Although he was a third-grade acolyte, his talent was comparable to a fourth-grade acolyte with the A.I Chip’s help, and he might even surpass them in learning spells.

Beirut and the others were only in the Level 1 Acolyte range. Bringing them out was no help at all, and they might even be a burden. Hence keeping them within the academy was also good for them. It was realistic, yet cruel.

“Come! Let me make the introductions!” Kaliweir smiled.

“The green haired girl is Lilisse, and the one beside is Neela. They are both apprentices under my mentor and advanced to Level 2 Acolytes two months ago.....”

“Hello! Sir Leylin!” Neela’s eyes shone and she took the initiative to approach Leylin.

“It is really lucky to be able to go on a mission with you this time!” Neela stuck out her chest and spoke coquettishly in a very

nasal pitch.

Seeing this scene, Raynor looked elsewhere, his expression a little gloomy.

“I only have a little talent in Potioneering and I must even thank Mentor Kroft, it was him who.....” Leylin rubbed his nose. He knew that he only needed to reveal a bit of desire and this beautiful girl would pounce into his arms. However, he had been concentrating on cultivation lately and had very little wants in this aspect.

Furthermore, after so many of his wild trysts in his previous world, to him, Neela was only a girl who was good looking.

“Alright, what are the contents of our mission?” Leylin took the initiative and asked, interrupting what Neela was going to say next.

“As this is our first time going on a mission together, I am preparing to take on the simplest one: patrolling the academy’s perimeters and cleaning up a few Red-Eyed Ravens, what do you all think?”

In fact, the four of them had discussed this before so Kaliweir was really only asking Leylin.

“Alright! My Rank 0 spells have not been fully grasped yet!” Leylin agreed.

This team of theirs was newly formed, so taking on a simple mission to improve their teamwork was within reason. From this, it could be seen that Kaliweir had matured a lot after Hank's death and his way of doing things was now better thought out.

“A.I Chip! Scan!” Leylin commanded silently.

[Beep! Raynor. Strength: 1.8, Agility: 1.9, Vitality: 2.5, Spiritual Force: 3.7. Status: Healthy]

[Lilisse. Strength: 1.9, Agility: 2.5, Vitality: 2.4, Spiritual Force: 4.3. Status: Healthy]

[Neela. Strength: 2.7, Agility: 3.4, Vitality: 2.9, Spiritual Force: 4.6. Status: Healthy]

“Ever since the processing capability of the A.I Chip increased, its perceptive ability has also increased. Not including the Magi, all the acolytes in the academy right now are unable to escape the readings of the A.I Chip.”

Leylin thought silently. These readings must naturally prioritise not alarming the other party. As official Magi have a layer of force

field around them constantly, the A.I Chip would definitely be discovered if it was to attempt to take readings of them.

However, as long as regular acolytes are within Leylin's scope, their every stat will be read by the A.I Chip.

“From this data, everyone has indeed advanced into Level 2 Acolyte. However, I never thought that Neela was the strongest of them. It seems like this girl has also practiced the Knight's breathing technique. Her body and strength are not to be underestimated!”

These few people had just advanced, and even if they had bought spell models before, they might not be able to comprehend it. Furthermore, the models have to be constructed in the mind, so they were definitely unfamiliar with it. After all, Rank 0 spells are still very dangerous to a Level 2 Acolyte. Without complete control of them, there is a chance of failing and even causing a backlash!

Based on just their physical strengths, Neela could possibly defeat the three of them in one fell swoop if no one was to use any spells.

This Neela, who seemed to be infatuated with and wanted to approach him, was actually the strongest out of the team of four. It was likely that even Kaliweir did not know of this. The corners of Leylin's lips arched into a smile.

To be in full control of Rank 0 spells, regular Level 2 Acolytes must practice for at least 3 months to half a year. However, for him, he will learn the spell in a flash once the A.I Chip has

completely analysed the spell model and transmitted it to his hippocampus.

As for the might of any of the Rank 0 spells, they are not something the level of a Knight can resist. Perhaps Grand Knights have a slight chance at that.

Obviously, Neela's data was only at the level of a Knight. Even if she had a secret technique, Leylin was not the slightest bit afraid.

While Leylin had been taking the readings, Kaliweir had already run to the counter and accepted the patrolling mission.

After the discussion with everyone, they set off and left the academy.

Leylin's eyes could not help but squint as the piercing sunlight shone down.

"Come to think of it, I have already stayed underground for over a year. Now that I have come out, it does seem a bit like a thousand-year-old corpse rising from the ground again.

Leylin used his hands to block the sunlight. His snow white hands were a sickly pale colour, like an ill person who lost too much blood. It was due to him staying underground the whole time and spending very little time basking in the sunlight reflected from the mosses in the gardens.

Of course, most acolytes from the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy have this problem.

In any case, as long as their strength increased and they used their Spiritual Force, raising a point of two of their Vitality was not a problem at all. Therefore, they did not need to go out everyday to bask in the sunlight.

“Let’s go!” Kaliweir took the lead.

Looking at the huge graveyard behind them and the two statues of the protectors, Leylin turned his head and followed the rest of the team.

“We are going to patrol the southwest area of the academy, where quite a few Red-Eyed Ravens have been showing up recently. We need to clean up their numbers, as well as a few other living organisms. Of course, all of the materials that we acquire will belong to us. Moreover, everyone receives a remuneration of 3 Magic Crystals.”

After the five of them walked out of the graveyard, Kaliweir picked a spot and took out a huge map and spoke as they crowded around.

On the faint yellow parchment paper, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was located in the centre and occupied about ten percent of the total area.

There were a few simple routes around it, and there were descriptions of the places written in black colour. A few dangerous places were also marked in red with warning signs.

Chapter 32: Red-Eyed Ravens

“Red-Eyed Ravens? We met with some when we first arrived at the academy but they were easily killed off by Professor Dorotte. He used a spell that seemed similar to Acidic Aqua Shot.” Leylin stroked his chin and recalled the scene of when he first entered the academy.

“We had better hurry there and begin our patrolling. This mission requires us to bring back the right claws of 10 Red-Eyed Ravens as evidence of completing the mission.....Do you guys have any other questions?”

Kaliweir ended with a question, displaying the bearings of a leader. After he saw Leylin and the others shake their heads, he continued and said: “Since we are teammates, let us not hide anything from each other. Each of us should report our general strengths so the others can have a better understanding! I’ll go first!”

“I’m Kaliweir, I have a Knight-level constitution and know a secret technique. I also know a Rank 0 spell!”

“Kaliweir, I never thought that you’d have learned a spell already! It seems like you’re ahead of me..... I’m Neela, I have Knight-level physical qualities and a secret technique. I am still learning the Rank 0 spell “Weary Hand” but I’m unable to use it yet!” While saying this, Neela looked at Kaliweir with a little surprise.

“I’m Lilisse, I.....I am still training to be a Knight, but my instructor says my dart-throwing isn’t bad. I don’t know any secret techniques as of yet!” Lilisse said shyly.

“Raynor, Preparatory Knight. I don’t know any spells but my archery skills aren’t bad!” He never thought that Kaliweir and Neela would have already begun to learn spells and was a little embarrassed. Patting the wooden bow on his back, he continued, “Don’t worry, I will not be a burden to all of you!”

“Leylin, Preparatory Knight. Right now I have learnt a spell!” Leylin rubbed his own nose.

“Even you have learnt a spell.....Oh! I’m sorry!” Raynor said a little disconcertingly. He originally came together with Leylin so he knew that Leylin’s aptitude was only a third grade acolyte. Never did he think that Leylin’s accomplishments would already exceed his aptitude as a fourth grade acolyte.

“No worries!” Leylin shook his head and indicated that he did not mind it.

In fact, Raynor’s meditation efficacy was much faster than Leylin’s. It was simply that he did not have enough Magic Crystals to exchange for information and other precious resources. Hence, he was gradually losing out to Leylin.

“You are indeed worthy of being called ‘Sir Leylin’! You know what outsiders are calling you now?” Neela said in admiration.

“Oh? I don’t mind hearing about how others are evaluating me!”

“A Potioneering genius who is seen once every fifty years! If you did not already have a mentor, the other Potioneering professors would have invited you to be their apprentice!” Neela’s pitch was very high and sparks almost seemed to jump out of her eyes.

Seeing Neela’s fiery gaze, as well as the expressions of Lilisse and the others, Leylin smiled bitterly.

To sell his potions faster, he could not help but take on the role of a Potioneering-genius acolyte. Fortunately, he had his senior Merlin to take the brunt of the attention off him. If not for this, the attention given to him would be much greater.

“Oh right! Leylin, you should have enough resources if you always sell potions right? Why would you still need to come out?”

Raynor asked softly.

“About this? I felt bored being cooped up in the academy. Besides, I have just learnt a spell so I need to familiarise myself with it!”

Leylin’s main purpose was to gain more experience and make preparations for travelling out alone to look for a black market in the future. However, such a thing could not be mentioned.

“Alright! Let the gossip end here! Our destination is not far away

but it will take some trouble to get there! If we don't move out soon, the sky will turn dark!"

Kaliweir pat his hands, picked up his cleaver and led the party.

"Let's go!" Leylin followed behind.

"I want to walk with you!" Neela walked by Leylin's side, not masking her intentions in the slightest.

Lilisse followed next, with Raynor at the back.

"Be careful, the area near the school is vacant land, but now that we have entered the forest, there will be a lot more danger!" Kaliweir continued walking as he reminded the party.

Leylin did not bother with Neela who was beside him. Instead, he paid more attention to his surroundings while also maximising the A.I Chip's detection range.

This was his first time coming into contact with the dangerous world outside of the academy so he could not help but be more alert.

Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was built in the depths of a black forest and there was a forsaken graveyard on top of the school. There were only small shrubberies and short trees around the school so the danger was not that great. However, after entering the forest, the countless trees acted as natural camouflage. It had

always been the hunting ground of many predators. Leylin could still recall that when they first arrived here, they met with a sneak attack.

[Alert! Alert! An unknown creature is approaching. Threat to the Host's body: Mild!]

As the A.I Chip's voice sounded, light blue lines formed an image in Leylin's vision. From the projection, Leylin could very clearly see a red line snaking its way to them.

“Whoosh!”

A black shadow suddenly leapt out from the grass and viciously bit at Kaliweir's neck.

Kaliweir's expression did not change as the black cleaver in his hands swung down, knocking the black shadow away.

The black shadow fell on the ground and revealed its true appearance. It was a snake that was one metre in length, with faint traces of blood on its body and only one eye on its triangular head.

“This is an Iron Thread One-Eyed Snake, be careful of its poison!” Neela warned.

Right at this moment, Lilisse, who was behind them, suddenly

struck and three throwing knives were launched towards the beast.

The Iron Thread One-Eyed Snake's body coiled to avoid two of the blades but the last one slashed at it as it passed, leaving a gash.

“Heh!” Suddenly, Kaliweir ran forward and swung his black cleaver down on the snake's head. With a cold flash, the head of the snake was cut off instantly!

The snake, which had lost its head, coiled in a circle, still bleeding profusely.

“Ah!” Lilisse was startled.

“It's already dead. This is just a natural reaction for the body. Haven't you learned about neurology?” Neela harrumphed.

“Only the poison sac and the skin of this Iron Thread One-Eyed Snake is useful. Whoever wants to collect the materials better hurry and do so now. The blood will attract many other living organisms here!” Kaliweir slowly spoke while putting away his cleaver.

“I will do it!” Raynor stepped forward and, after a short while, the five of them continued on their journey.

“A.I Chip! Was the information from earlier recorded?”

[Beep! The recording is done! Iron Thread One-Eyed Snake, Snake type. Strength: 1.1, Agility: 2.1, Vitality: 1.6. The blood sample has been collected and the composition of muscle has been recorded!]

The A.I Chip's feedback was timely. Leylin nodded his head and hastened his footsteps.

Ten-odd days later, inside the black forest.

A Red-Eyed Raven blinked its alert eyes and perched on a branch as it constantly ruffled its feathers.

Whoosh! Suddenly, a white arrow was shot.

“Caw!” the Raven flapped its wings to move away. While it was evading, there were another three flashes of white light, belonging to the throwing knives that were shooting towards it.

Dodging in an elegant arc, the Red-Eyed Raven avoided the knives and landed in an open space.

“Kill!” A shadow hopped out from some shrubbery, two hands grasping a cleaver, and hacked towards the Red-Eyed Raven. It seemed like the arrow and the throwing knives earlier had all been there to force the Red-Eyed Raven to the ground.

A black cleaver brought about a gale as it hacked at the Red-Eyed Raven.

“Caw Caw!” The Red-Eyed Raven cawed loudly, letting off an unpleasant noise.

There was a flash of human-like resentment in the raven’s eyes and a pair of black claws met with the cleaver.

Clang!

Although the Red-Eyed Raven was a little larger than the average raven, it was only about the same size as a chicken. It had unexpectedly used its black claws to push back the Knight wielding the black cleaver.

“Caw!” The Red-Eyed Raven cawed again, and a few black feathers drifted down from its body.

Taking advantage of the retreating Knight, the Red-Eyed Raven actually went forward and clawed at the Knight’s face with its sharp claws!

“Pandora - Greygonger!”

A hurried and quick incantation sounded and a ball of green liquid flew out suddenly, hitting the Red-Eyed Raven squarely on

its body.

Psshhh! White mist rose continuously, and the cries of a Red-Eyed Raven sounded.

A few seconds later, the screams from the Raven completely vanished, and all that was left was a ditch. Lying inside were a few feathers which did not have enough time to corrode.

“Are you alright, Kaliweir?!”

The shrubbery shook and a few figures made their way through it.

Kaliweir shook his head, “No worries! Although the Red-Eyed Raven has the strength of a Knight and can even fly, it is still not an opponent for us humans who wield weapons!”

Looking at the person in the middle, “Leylin! The timing of the Acidic Aqua Shot earlier was good!”

“It was all due to everybody’s teamwork!” Leylin smiled.

Kaliweir then walked to the large ditch, used a branch to brush away the feathers, and picked up 2 black claws from inside.

The side of the black claws was extremely sharp. They released a chilling luster as if reflecting the difficulty of dealing with its

original owner.

“Although the might of the Acidic Aqua Shot is great, it also corroded the Red-Eyed Raven greatly. Apart from its hard claws, there is nothing left.....” Kaliweir said with a tinge of regret.

“Hmph! If not for Leylin, you guys might have paid some kind of price to kill the Red-Eyed Raven!” Neela harrumphed at the side, seemingly displeased.

“That’s true!” Kaliweir sheathed his cleaver. Right now he had matured a lot and knew that Neela was rather spiteful, so he was not angry at all.

“With this Red-Eyed Raven, we have gathered enough materials. Should we head back to the school to complete the mission?”

Seeing that Raynor and the rest were looking tired, Kaliweir asked.

“Naturally, we have to go back! The forest is too dangerous. We couldn’t even have a good sleep during the night!” Neela said immediately.

Lilisse and Raynor hurriedly nodded their heads too.

As for Leylin, he also felt a little exhausted as the forest had been riddled with danger. Even though he had the A.I Chip to warn him, he was still in a heightened state of anxiety for a prolonged period.

His mind felt extremely weary as well, and right now he was beginning to miss the hot water and bed in the academy.

“Alright! Then let us go back first!”

Kaliweir was a little regretful as he carefully put away the claw of the Red-Eyed Raven, “What a pity! With our abilities, we could definitely kill more of the Red-Eyed Ravens. They are worth much more money than the Iron Thread One-Eyed Snake from before.....”

“There is no end to earning Magic Crystals but right now, our team, as a whole, is completely exhausted and we have reached a dangerous state. If we do not hurry back to the academy, I’m afraid that we will make mistakes during our next hunt, which may even result in death!”

Leylin’s voice was cold and distinct. He was a person who kept his cool at all times, and he wouldn’t lose his bearings over a little profit dangling before him.

“Alright! Then let us go back!”

Kaliweir only hesitated a little and then nodded his head in agreement.

Hearing Kaliweir’s words, the expressions of the other four turned much better. Even Neela, who was feeling spiteful, also loosened up and smiled brightly.

The party packed up quickly and started on the trip home.

Chapter 33: Violent Hilly Bear

The chirping of insects could be heard in the quiet forest from time to time, and the lush branches and leaves of the trees covered the sun completely. Sunrays occasionally shone through the gaps like beams of light.

“Caw Caw!” Familiar sounding cries could be heard ahead.

Kaliweir, who was leading at the forefront, furrowed his brows, “Why are there so many Red-Eyed Ravens!? These creatures are very aggressive towards humans! If we do not clean their numbers up in time, they will attract more of their kind which will be extremely troublesome!”

“What now? Should we take a detour?” Raynor asked.

“I’m afraid that might not work, they have already discovered us!” Leylin looked at the image in the A.I Chip and said without looking back.

The sound of wings flapping gradually got closer. Kaliweir laughed, “Since they have voluntarily come to look for us, we shouldn’t hesitate to welcome them!”

The expressions of the others were at ease. After this period of polishing their teamwork, they all have a set of strategies that were customised to deal with the Red-Eyed Ravens.

“Not good! There are 2 of them!” Leylin looked at the screen and his expression changed suddenly.

Kaliweir was startled. As per Leylin’s warning, there was indeed another black shadow behind the first Red-Eyed Raven that flew over, and its size seemed to be bigger than others of its kind.

“We’re in trouble!” Kaliweir’s brows furrowed, “Leylin and Neela, you two deal with the one in front! As for the other one, leave it to us three!”

“Prepare well!” Leylin said to Neela behind him, and drew the crossbow that was slung on his back.

“Measuring wind power and humidity! Adjusting trajectory.....”

Whoosh! A black line streaked across the sky and pierced through the Red-Eyed Raven’s body, bringing along a few feathers with it.

“Caw!” The Red-Eyed Raven at the front let out an angry cry and flew towards Leylin.

It actually seemed like it did not sustain any injuries.

“Let’s lure it away!” Leylin’s expression did not change, and he put down the crossbow that was in his hands.

Thanks to the A.I Chip, he was very clear that the arrow earlier

did hit the Red-Eyed Raven, but the vitality of these crows was rather high, being almost similar to a human Knight. Their feathers were extremely hard too; hence, it did not receive much damage.

The weapons of regular humans do not pose much threat to the creatures of the Magus World.

Seeing Leylin and Neela luring a Red-Eyed Raven away, Kaliweir made up his mind. He shouted loudly, “Raynor and Lilisse, stall the other Red-Eyed Raven that is behind and give me time to prepare my spell.”

Raynor and Lilisse looked at each other, and then dashed towards the Red-Eyed Raven at the back.

As Raynor ran, he grabbed the bow on his back and shot towards the sky. A few throwing knives accompanied the arrow.

“Caw Caw!” The huge Red-Eyed Raven flapped its black wings, and slapped the arrow and knives down.

“It actually used its bare wings to knocked the arrow away!” Raynor’s face turned pale and his footsteps halted.

However, the Red-Eyed Raven that was significantly larger than its counterpart had already swooped down and its huge claws cut into Raynor’s shoulders, leaving a gash.

Raynor was pinned to the ground by the Red-Eyed Raven.

“Save.....Save me!” Raynor shouted and pleaded.

Bang!! Just as the Red-Eyed Raven was about to peck down, a bright light flashed. Lilisse raised a huge sword that was even larger than her and swatted the Red-Eyed Raven away.

“Bam!” An iron wire that was made into a net was thrown in front of Raynor.

“I’ll stall it, hurry and take the chance to throw the net!” Lilisse, who was usually quiet and a little shy, now seemed to be a completely different person.

“Okay!” Raynor looked at Kaliweir, who was still preparing the cast his spell, and picked up the net.

Lilisse had obviously trained with swordplay before, and the huge steel sword brandished in her hands turned into a silver flash as she knocked the Red-Eyed Raven away to the side.

“Ha!” With a beautiful sweep, Lilisse knocked the Red-Eyed Raven down onto the floor, making mud and grit splatter everywhere.

“A good chance!” Raynor’s eyes flashed, and the sharp pain transmitting through his shoulder made his eyes a little bloodshot as he spread the steel wire net and trapped the Red-Eyed Raven

within it.

“Caw Caw!” The Red-Eyed Raven continuously thrashed inside, and it seemed as though it would break free from the steel wire net at any moment.

“Kaliweir, hurry!” The Red-Eyed Raven’s feathers are too thick, I can’t deal much damage to it!”

Lilisse shouted anxiously.

“Thank you for your efforts!” At this moment, Kaliweir finally finished his spell, and a dark red coloured fireball was blazing in his hands.

“Hurry and move!” After Kaliweir shouted, Lilisse and Raynor hurriedly scattered.

“Let’s go! Negative Energy Fireball!” With a fling of Kaliweir’s hands, the dark red fireball streaked across with a booming sound until it landed perfectly on the Red-Eyed Raven’s body.

Boom! A huge sound reverberated continuously in all directions, along with a surging heat wave.

The intense wind from the explosion also burned a huge crater in the ground, and the surrounding plants and shrubbery did not escape from it either.

“Nice one!” Raynor had run a little too slowly and was swept onto the ground by the wind behind him. His clothes were stained with mud. However, when he looked at the Red-Eyed Raven, he was indescribably happy.

“Haah.....” Kaliweir panted too, “This Negative Energy Fireball takes too long to cast and I need someone to help me stall the enemy. However, its might is extremely great!”

Lilisse straightened her fringe. As she looked towards the direction that Leylin and Neela had run in, there was an obvious tinge of worry in her eyes, “I wonder how they are doing now?”

“Don’t worry! Leylin and Neela are very strong, and we also managed to deal with the bigger one ourselves.....” Kaliweir comforted her. This was the first mission that he had taken in a year, and he, too, wanted the perfect ending.

“We’re alright!” Just as Kaliweir was speaking, both Leylin and Neela walked out from a thicket of bushes.

A few black feathers clung to their bodies, but they did not seem to have sustained any injuries.

“Where is the other one?”

“Over here!” Leylin raised the black claws in his hands, and then looked at the huge pit. “Wow this fellow. I reckon that had at least

6 degrees of power, it seems like Kaliweir is pursuing lethal spells.

“Since everyone is okay, let us hurry back, I have a bad feeling about this!” Kaliweir’s face darkened, “The monsters lurking around the school these days seem to be a little too much!”

“I agree, were the academy missions before this dangerous?” Leylin asked.

“That’s not right! Even if we accepted a patrolling mission like this, we needed at least 1 month to find 10 Red-Eyed Ravens. However, we have exceeded that amount in just 10 days!” Neela explained beside him.

“After we return, let us report this situation, I feel there’s something amiss!” Lilisse said suddenly.

“If there are any problems it’ll be for the Magi to solve! We had better leave here as soon as possible, I don’t feel safe out here!” Raynor added.

“Nicely said! Let us hurry!” Kaliweir said as he threw the broken iron wire net aside and picked up a black claw.

As everyone did not have any objections, the team hurried back.

“Why would these 2 Red-Eyed Ravens obstruct us on our return trip back to the academy? Could it just be a coincidence?” Leylin suddenly felt uneasy and hastened his footsteps.

The rest of them seemed to have the same ominous feeling, and the team hurried along.

“Do you think those 2 Red-Eyed Ravens earlier were guarding some treasures? You know, ravens have a habit of collecting shiny items!”

Neela, who was at the back of the group, saw the gloomy expressions on everyone and said half-jokingly.

“Those are normal ravens. Although the Red-Eyed Ravens also have raven in their name, their bloodlines are closer to that of a Bramble Thorny Bird. Therefore, they don’t have the habit of searching for treasures, but instead have an acute sense for a few special plants. In fact, Magi often raise Bramble Thorny Birds too, to use them to search for those special plants!” Leylin replied, not turning back.

“How do you know that?” Raynor was obviously not convinced.

“Bramble Thorny Bird’s origins and how to raise them. It’s on the level 3 bookshelf in the library, I read it recently.” Leylin replied blandly.

“Oh! Leylin! You’re so awesome!” Sparks could be seen in Neela’s eyes again.

Raynor turned away.

“Eh?” Leylin took a sniff and suddenly smelled a very fragrant scent.

“Stop! Did you guys smell anything?” Leylin hurriedly halted.

The group stopped. “Smell what?” Kaliweir’s expression tightened, and he gripped the cleaver in his hands.

“I seem to have smelled a very fragrant scent!” Leylin explained.

“Fragrance? There are only odours that make people want to vomit in this forest! And now it is getting more serious!” Raynor interrupted.

“I actually smelled a whiff of Jasmine Flowers mixed with Black-Oiled Roses!” Lilisse wrinkled her nose.

“Everyone be careful! There is the stench of a wild beast!” Shiing! Kaliweir unsheathed his cleaver. This situation was obviously strange. Leylin also placed his hands into his waist pouch.

Hu! A gust of wind blew over. It carried a fishy stench that stung the nose.

Grooarr!!! The roar of a ruthless beast sounded.

The plants in the surrounding black forest also bent from the

pressure caused by the beast's roar.

Kaliweir's face changed greatly, "Be careful, it's a huge one!"

Boom Boom! The heavy steps rang. Leylin and the rest saw the appearance of the creature.

It was a huge black bear and its skull was split open, as if exposing its brain. There was also a 'V'-shaped, white mark on its chest, like a lightning scar.

"Be careful! It's the Violent Hilly Bear; each one is comparable to a Level 3 Acolyte! Last time, it was this fellow that we met!"

Kaliweir's pupils shrank to the size of a pin, "Be careful of its roaring attack. It was this attack that killed Hank previously!"

"Damn it! Let's disperse and run!" Raynor's face turned pale and he suddenly turned around and scooted off.

"This coward!" Neela fumed and her face turned red. The Violent Hilly Bear increased its speed because of Raynor's sudden escape.

"There is no choice left! This exceeds our capabilities, so let's scatter and run. Let's hope to meet each other back in the academy!"

Kaliweir smiled bitterly and made his decision.

Chapter 34: A Knight's Breakthrough

After Kaliweir finished speaking, he took out a black powder-like substance from his robes and sprinkled it onto his legs. He suddenly appeared taller and upon closer inspection, it seemed that not only had his height increased, but there were also tufts of black fur growing out of the bottom of his shoes.

With this black fur, Kaliweir's speed increased tremendously and he disappeared from the forest in the span of a few steps, with a speed faster than Raynor's.

“The seed from a blade of Nimble Grass? It seems like Kaliweir used it to protect his life, but the aftereffects of this seed are not small!”

Leylin muttered, looking towards the two girls at his side, “It is a little embarrassing to say this, but we had still better split up!”

“Since we chose to come out here and take such risks, we should naturally be prepared to lose our lives! To be honest, the fact that you were able to stay behind those two guys has already shocked us!”

Neela said as she took out a green potion in a test tube and threw it on the floor. A green-coloured hurricane swept up and enshrouded Neela and Lillise within its centre.

“See you at the academy!” Enveloped in a whirlwind of green, the two girls disappeared from Leylin's vision.

“Everyone has a trump card, huh?” Leylin smiled, moving his feet and disappearing from the forest.

In a flash, the party of five began to split up, with everyone using their own methods to escape from the scene.

Leylin’s footsteps never faltered, and the trees on either side of him disappeared into the distance as he sped ahead.

“The attack power of the Violent Hilly Bear is extremely high, while its speed is just average. In the party of five, Kaliweir used the Nimble Grass, while Neela and Lillise used a speed-enhancing potion. As for me, I have the strength of a Knight, and therefore my speed is pretty good. However, Raynor, the first to run, has the slowest speed amongst the five of us and is also in the greatest danger. If he did not prepare any trump cards, it is highly likely for him to die here.”

“I should be able to escape from this Violent Hilly Bear’s hunting grounds with Raynor as a decoy, so I had better not use this potion just yet!”

As a Potions Master, Leylin was still rather rich despite not being able to sell his goods in bulk. Naturally, he had prepared several trump cards that could protect his life, without which he would not have the confidence to come outside to train.

Every step he took was perfect, his every move and action seemed to blend in with the forest and he did not receive any obstructions

from any branches or vines, his actions as smooth as flowing water. His speed was actually almost the same as Kaliweir who had used the Nimble Grass.

“Groarrrr!” A vicious roar sounded.

Suddenly, a black figure appeared in front of Leylin, and with it came a huge bear paw.

“Impossible! How could it have made a detour to be in front of me? Was Raynor unable to draw it away?”

Greatly startled, Leylin’s body reacted, his conditioned reflexes causing him to take out his cross blade and begin slashing in front of him. .

Clang! Leylin hurriedly used the huge recoil travelling through the cross blade to turn his body around and escape the attack range of the bear’s paw. He did not have a good grip on the cross blade and as a result, it flew out of his hands.

Bang!

At this moment, Leylin did not hesitate to throw a fire red potion at the Violent Hilly Bear.

The moment the test tube exploded, a scorching red flame suddenly engulfed the Violent Hilly Bear.

Leylin did not stay to watch the scene. Instead, he immediately turned around and ran.

“The explosive potion’s might may be great, comparable to an average Rank 0 spells, however, it still lacks the power to penetrate the Violent Hilly Bear’s thick hide.

“Groarrr!” The Violent Hilly Bear’s roar sounded from behind, and it seemed to be getting closer to Leylin.

Leylin turned around to look, and his eyes almost popped out, “This is illogical!”

He saw that the Violent Hilly Bear’s head was a little charred, but the rest of the body remained undamaged. The explosive potion seemed to do nothing else apart from further enraging the Violent Hilly Bear.

The Violent Hilly Bear’s massively oversized body seemed to be as light as a feather and did not hinder its speed in the slightest, allowing it to tail behind Leylin.

“A.I Chip! Take readings!”

Leylin gave a command, but the A.I Chip did not reply even after half a day and only a faint static noise could be heard.

“A.I Chip! A.I Chip!” Leylin called out again, but it was to no avail.

“Damn it, just what exactly is happening?”

Leylin’s face distorted in frustration. The A.I Chip was his greatest trump card in this world. Suddenly losing it had turned him a little crazy.

Thwack! The Violent Hilly Bear caught up to Leylin once again, and it swatted with his massive paws as if it was swatting at a mosquito.

“Umbra’s Hand!” Leylin hurriedly chanted and a black coloured hand rose from the Violent Hilly Bear’s shadow, firmly holding on to the bear’s paw.

The huge bear roared nonstop, but was unable to escape from the Umbra’s Hand.

Seizing this opportunity, Leylin hurriedly ran off. “The Umbra’s Hand’s effect will only last for a few seconds! I must hurry!”

Leylin fled miserably.

“Damn it!” Leylin grumbled yet again, “What on earth is going on? This Violent Hilly Bear is stronger than my expectations, and it has such a swift speed too!”

In the black forest, the grass and shrubbery blew in the strong wind and the occasional insect cry could be heard from time to time.

“At last, I have finally escaped for now!” Leylin ran for a dozen-odd minutes before he dared to turn back and look. The dark forest resembled the mouth of a huge beast, seemingly wanting to swallow him whole.

“Caw! Caw!” Just when Leylin had finally caught his breath, the abominable sound of ravens could be heard in the sky.

Leylin raised his head and looked. There were ravens that were much larger than the Red-Eyed Ravens from earlier. Furthermore, there were three of them! Once they spotted Leylin, they immediately swooped down towards him.

“My cross blade has already been lost and my Spiritual Force and Magical Power are almost drained too. Am I going to die here today?”

An ominous premonition rose in Leylin’s heart.

A black talon came slashing at him, and Leylin hurriedly attempted to dodge it. In spite of his attempts, the claw of the raven etched three gashes into his back.

The immense pain clouded Leylin’s vision, “No! I don’t want to

die! I have not qualified as a Magus yet! Or seen the rest of the world! How could I just die a silent death here !”

As he tumbled on the ground, Leylin picked up a green rock from behind him.

“Ha!” Jumping back up, he viciously smashed the rock down onto the Red-Eyed Raven’s head!

Bang! This time, Leylin used all of his strength, and the Red-Eyed Raven swayed as it fell onto the floor.

“Caw! Caw!” Angry cries were heard in the sky. Seeing that their comrade had died like that, the other two Red-Eyed Ravens immediately cried out and swooped down to avenge it.

“Bring it on!” Leylin lowered himself slightly, coiling his body into position, like a leopard who was about to catch its prey.

He felt every artery in his body expanding quickly, and the blood continuously surged, circulating huge amounts of energy into the various parts of his body. A warm current gradually rose in his lower abdomen, and the wound on his back no longer seemed as painful.

“Die!” Leylin shouted, and flung the rock in his hands out ruthlessly. This time, he seemed to have used all his energy, and the warmth in his body constantly responded to him. The rock let out an ear piercing whistle and directly struck one of the Red-Eyed

Ravens.

“This is.....Internal life energy!” Leylin was mildly shocked. He had attained the qualities of a Preparatory Knight long ago. Moreover, he meditated constantly, so he was almost comparable to that of an actual Knight. However, he had not been able to ignite his internal life energy until now, and he never thought that he would be able to have a break through at this point.

Right at that moment, the warm current in his lower abdomen travelled to his two eyes, and a piercing pain in his eyes made them water.

When he opened his eyes, his vision was extremely blurry, as if he was shrouded in mist. However, the faint blue words of the A.I Chip had finally reappeared.

[Beep! The host has suffered from an unknown effect.....
Abnormality in the current state!]

[Ho..... Host is hallucinating!]

The screen of the A.I Chip displayed was intermittent, as if it was suffering from a very strong interference.

“Hallucination!” Leylin was startled. However, at this moment,

the other Red-Eyed Raven had already swooped down right in front of him. Behind him, there came a violent roar from the forest and a massive bear paw vehemently struck out at Leylin with a hooked claw.

Facing such a life-threatening attack, Leylin grit his teeth and actually closed both his eyes.

The sharp claws pierced his body and he felt an immense pain. However, it was not as painful as he thought, and Leylin's body did not fall.

“It really is like this, huh?” Leylin's lips curled upwards.

“A.I Chip! Show me my current state!”

The A.I Chip's display merely appeared more distinct in the darkness.

The lines full of red-coloured warnings about the abnormal status was extremely striking, but Leylin had actually not realised it before.

[Beep! Detection over! The Host has breathed in very potent and delicate hallucinatory gas particles! The five senses were affected! To expel or not?]

“Begin expulsion immediately!” Leylin commanded.

[Beep! Reserve energy has been used, expulsion in progress!]

The A.I Chip indicated that the expulsion was complete, and only then did Leylin open his eyes.

Right now, he was situated inside a shrubbery, and the Violent Hilly Bear and Red-Eyed Raven disappeared without a trace.

There were many cuts on his body from the barbs in the shrubbery, and blood were dripping from them. However, there were no gashes on his back.

“It seems like it really was an illusion. What I saw earlier was completely artificial!”

Leylin looked at his surroundings again. On the left, there was a tree that had fallen, and he saw traces of scorch marks in his surroundings.

“Although what I saw was fake, my reactions were all real. The explosive potion and Umbra’s Hand uprooted the tree, and it is very likely that I mistook the tree for the Violent Hilly Bear!”

Leylin felt a little regretful. The explosive potion had cost him plenty of Magic Crystals, and he had spent a whopping amount

before buying the formula and ingredients from Woox. But now, he had actually used it against a tree.

“However, it’s not like I didn’t reap any benefits.” Leylin looked at the prompt shown by the A.I Chip earlier.

[Secretion of adrenaline in the Host’s body has rapidly increased, blood flow has increased by 58%!]

[The Host has ignited internal life energy and broke through the boundaries of a Knight!]

“It might have been an illusion all along, but the igniting my internal life energy and advancing to a Knight was real!”

“It is also thanks to my advancement into a Knight that led me to realise that something was amiss, if not, I would have died just like that!”

Leylin was a little afraid, “A.I Chip! Record the status I was in earlier when I broke through into a Knight!”

[Beep! Recording is done, name: State of advancing to a Knight]

“This state may be the key to igniting internal life energy! However why would it have some resemblance to the magic powers from my previous world? It seems extremely unconventional!”

Leylin harboured a few suspicions. This Knight’s advancement method was extremely perilous. Many of the situations required luck, otherwise, there might be an excessive secretion of adrenaline, opening up the possibility of being poisoned to death.

Chapter 35: Returning To The Academy

“I wonder how Kaliweir and the others are doing now?”

When Leylin feebly picked himself up, he felt like his whole body was going to fall apart.

“Even with the A.I Chip, I have fallen into this state, let alone their situations. I had better find them quickly, it would be really terrible if they were to fall into a trap or encounter other wild beasts.

Leylin drew out a red-coloured potion from his waist pouch and opened the wooden plug. He poured the red liquid onto his wounds.

Hiss! White mist continuously rose up from the wound. Leylin gritted his teeth, his face a little twisted.

After the white mist dispersed, a red membrane was covering the wound, and the bleeding had already stopped. It had also closed the wound. Leylin waved his hands around and noticed that his movements were not restricted.

“This hemostatic potion is very good, but it’s so painful when it’s being used!”

Leylin grumbled, drew out another blue coloured potion, and gulped it down. The blue potion was sweet and carried the

fragrance of white bread. Leylin felt his body getting much better and also recovered some strength. He walked out from the shrubbery and leaned against a big tree to rest.

“A.I Chip! For that hallucinatory gas, are there any remedies against it?”

Since he knew that the only danger over there was the hallucinatory gas particles, Leylin did not mind rescuing his other party members.

If it really wasn't possible, then Leylin would just turn his head and return to the academy to inform the professors while praying for them.

[Suggestion: Freshwater has good protective properties against the infiltration of the gas particles!]

The A.I Chip replied.

“Freshwater, huh?” Leylin opened his water bottle and soaked a handkerchief, wrapping it over his nose and mouth before heading back to their previous location.

“I thought that I had run very far away, but I haven't even gone a thousand metres!” Leylin retraced his footsteps. Moments later, when he returned back to where the party of five had split up, he

was a little speechless.

“A.I Chip! Scan the area in front and form a map!”

Since he knew that the path in front was filled with hallucinatory gas particles, Leylin still felt very vulnerable despite his safeguard.

[Beep! Scan completed!]

An image appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes. Where the five of them were earlier, there was a depression with huge mushrooms growing out from it.

These mushrooms were extremely big and almost as tall as a human being. Each one was a mysterious purple colour, with many black spots faintly forming the image of a human in pain.

“What type of mushrooms are these?”

[Comparing to database! Similarity level: Spider-Faced Mushroom 98.7%, Spear-Lining Mushroom 74.5%, Purple Umbrella Flower 23.3%]

“Spider-Faced Mushroom?” Leylin thought back to an image he had seen in a picture book from the library.

“The Spider-Faced Mushroom is a very mysterious plant. It is able to emit extremely strong hallucinatory gas particles, and people with weak constitutions and other intelligent beings will not be able to resist them. They will often attract flying beasts and live together in harmony with them. It seems like the two Red-Eyed Ravens from earlier were attracted to them.”

Leylin noticed a few bones at the stem of the purple mushroom, some seemed to belong to humans, and some were from various creatures.

“However, these kinds of dangerous plants should have been cleaned up around our school area, unless they were moved here only recently!”

Leylin conjectured and suddenly felt chills over his body as if he had discovered a part of a conspiracy.

Shaking his head, “This is not something that I can attend to now. I had better hurry and look for Neela and the others and then leave immediately!”

With the help of the A.I Chip, finding the others of his party members proved to be extremely easy.

Raynor was lying not far away, with one of his thighs impaled on a branch. It seemed like he had run into it himself.

Not long later, Kaliweir was found too. At this moment, he looked like a lunatic, cleaving at a huge black boulder. He could not even see Leylin walking over, and was knocked out by Leylin in the end.

As for Neela and Lilisse, they were the luckiest. Not long after they left, they had been entangled within some vines. When Leylin found them, they were still clad in the glow of the green hastening potion and were actually not injured at all.

Leylin brought the four of them far away from the Spider-Faced Mushroom. When he found a stream, he tossed all of them into the water.

This was the suggestion given by the A.I Chip.

With the bone-chilling cold water from the stream invading the noses and throats of Kaliweir and the others, their bodies began to convulse violently.

“Cough Cough!” Kaliweir and the others started to cough violently.

Leylin moved the few of them onto flat ground and laid them on their backs. He then picked up a weapon and got into a defensive stance.

“What happened?” Kaliweir rubbed his aching head and propped himself up.

“Do you still remember what happened earlier?” Leylin came in front of Kaliweir.

“Yes! I remember now, we met with the Violent Hilly Bear and even some Direwolves!” Kaliweir touched the gash on his face.

“Was it you who saved us?”

“Indeed! However, what we encountered were not ferocious beasts. I’ll explain it when the others have woken up!” Leylin pointed at the others, who seemed to be regaining consciousness slowly.

When the few of them left the domain of the Spider-Faced Mushrooms and gulped down huge amounts of fresh water, their minds started to clear again.

Leylin explained the matter of the Spider-Faced Mushrooms to them. As for himself, he said that he was lucky to avoid their situations because he had an item that could resist hallucinations.

After listening to Leylin, the expressions of Kaliweir and the others weren’t very good at all.

“Leylin! Thank you! I owe you my life!” Kaliweir said solemnly.

“Us too!” Neela and Lilisse spoke at the same time. As for Raynor,

he opened his mouth but no words came out from it.

“I suggest that you all better tend to the injuries on your bodies first!” Leylin pointed to the puncture in Raynor’s thigh.

“Alright. I have some medicinal powder here. Do you need it, Raynor?”

Kaliweir felt for the item on his body, and then retrieved a bottle of medicinal powder from his waist pouch and gave it to Raynor.

Leylin took a whiff and knew that it was medicine from the regular world. While it had certain effectiveness, it was still incomparable to a hemostasis potion.

The party slowly treated the wounds on their bodies. Raynor was the most injured, and his lips were as pale as snow. His legs were wrapped very thickly with gauze. Kaliweir managed to find a stick for him to use as a crutch, so he could at least manage to walk.

The physiques of Magi already begin to differ from those of regular humans. With the help of potions, wounds that are not too severe will usually finish healing in a few nights.

“What should we do next?” Kaliweir looked at Leylin. Although he was the party leader in name, Leylin’s performance made him bow his head.

“Can you still walk?” Leylin asked Raynor.

“I can definitely walk! Don’t... don’t leave me behind!” Raynor hurriedly propped himself up with the crutch.

“Then we had better hurry and set off!” Leylin thought of the Spider-Faced Mushrooms and of his own predictions. He had an ominous feeling about the recent events.

“That’s right!” Neela and Lilisse agreed in unison, it seemed like they were afraid of this place already.

“My Hastening Potion! That was something that I spent 5 Magic Crystals on!” Along the journey, Neela lamented.

“That is still okay, look at me!” Kaliweir adjusted his sack; the most important things were the 12 Red-Eyed Raven claws in it as they were the proof of completing the mission. He then pointed to his ankle.

On his legs, tufts of black fur already covered his calves and began spreading to his thigh area.

“Although a seed from the Nimble Grass can allow you to run quickly, their reproductive abilities are too great. After using them, you will definitely be contaminated. If you don’t hurry back to the academy to take care of it, you might soon become a furry man!”

“Outer appearance is one thing. The most important thing is that

if the Nimble Grass live on a human's body for a long time, there will be poisonous properties! At that time, you can only amputate your leg!" Kaliweir said with a resolved expression, "Hurry!"

Although he still wore a deadpanned expression, his footsteps had obviously quickened.

After suffering from the Spider-Faced Mushrooms' attack, the five of them became easily frightened on the way home. Any rustling of leaves or blowing of the wind would make them feel nervous for a while.

When they finally saw the Abyssal Bone Forest Graveyard, Leylin swore that he had never found this graveyard so lovable before now.

"Password!" This time, the two-headed dog asked in a female voice.

"Abyssal Bone is paramount!" Kaliweir said slowly.

The password changes whenever a certain period of time has passed. However, the password will naturally be told in advance to those who go out on a mission, like them.

"Correct!" The two-headed dog allowed them to pass and returned to being a statue on the platform.

Leylin finally heaved a sigh of relief when they entered the

academy's gates.

Although there were no deaths on this mission, they still met with several dangers along the way. If not for the A.I Chip's help, it was very likely that their party would have been wiped out completely.

“Let's go! We'll first hand in our mission!” Kaliweir's expression loosened and he smiled. As for Lilisse and Neela, they both seemed relieved as well.

The five of them walked towards the Mission Area. Kaliweir queued in front of the counter while the other four waited to the side.

“Neela, did the missions cause so many injuries or deaths in the past?”

Leylin felt that the atmosphere was a little off. The number of casualties in the Mission Area had obviously increased, and there were curses and sobbing heard from time to time.

“We don't usually have this many! I can guarantee that!” Neela looked at the many acolytes with darkened expressions on their faces. It seemed like not only did they fail their missions, but they had also paid a heavy price for them.

“Look! The missions have been refreshed!”

Leylin raised his head and saw a notice hanging in the upper corner of the black wall, with striking red words.

“Attention! There has been a significant increase in the dangerous creatures around the academy. We hope that the acolytes who go out in the future will be more cautious. If you aren’t a Level 3 Acolyte, we recommend that you stay inside.

These words were a size bigger than the others and were written in a striking red font.

Behind the warning, there was a new mission written in red.

“Mission: Find out the source of the abnormalities in the academy’s vicinity. Reward: 500 Magic Crystals, high-grade information on 3 topics at will, or an improved spell model. This mission is categorised as extremely dangerous, be prudent when accepting this mission!”

“500 Magic Crystals, high-grade information on 3 topics, or even an improved spell model!” Leylin exclaimed.

“If only I had that many Magic Crystals!” Lilisse was also intimidated by the generous reward.

Chapter 36: Bottleneck

“[Didn't you read the notice](#)? If you aren't a Level 3 Acolyte, then going out is practically throwing your life away!”

[tl: this voice is not kaiweir but another person at the counter]

A voice sounded, and Kaliweir appeared behind Neela.

“You're back?” Leylin asked.

“Yeah! Here is the reward for our mission. 15 Magic Crystals!” Kaliweir opened the pouch and there, sat 15 Magic Crystals.

“According to our prior agreement, each of us gets 3 Magic Crystals!” Kaliweir divided the Magic Crystals and then opened a large black sack. It was filled with many Red-Eyed Raven claws, as well as feathers, eyeballs and other miscellaneous materials.

“There is also this stuff! Only the Red-Eyed Ravens' two claws have some worth. Each one can be sold for about 1 Magic Crystal. As for the other materials, they're worth roughly 15 Magic Crystals in total! Do you guys have any questions? If not, we'll be dividing them accordingly!”

The Red-Eyed Raven claws were only needed to prove that the mission had been completed. After it has been confirmed, the acolytes are allowed to keep them, and they can be considered additional income.

“I have no problem with that!” Leylin smiled. This time, he merely wanted to gain experience and was not too fussed about the number of Magic Crystals.

This time, earning 30 Magic Crystals at once could be considered a lot. However, there were also the expenditures of this mission to factor in — Neela and Lilisse used a hastening potion, and Kaliweir used the seed from the Nimble Grass. As for Leylin, he had used an explosive potion, hemostasis potion, and a strength potion. All these expenditures amounted to over 30 Magic Crystals.

If they were to calculate everything, the mission would be considered a flop and would not even compare to Leylin’s brewing of potions to earn money.

Seeing as Leylin had agreed, Neela, Lilisse, and Raynor could only nod their heads.

“In this mission, Leylin, you did the most. If not for you, we would have long been dead, so it’s alright if you take a little more!” Kaliweir was extremely sincere, and it seemed as though he had made up his mind about this long ago.

“I don’t need it!” Leylin smiled and picked out two of the Red-Eyed Raven claws, as well as some other materials, from the bag. After estimating that the things he had taken out were worth around 6 Magic Crystals, he stopped.

“These will be enough for me.”

“Alright, then we will redistribute the items again.....” Kaliweir felt a little forced, but Lilisse and Raynor were obviously happy about it.

All of them, more or less, had wounds on their bodies. Something seemed to have happened recently to the academy, and accepting missions would no longer be a possibility if it turned out to be dangerous. The group quickly exchanged their contact information and left the mission area.

Kaliweir left the fastest. By now, the black fur had already grown to his thighs, making his legs look like those of a gorilla, and it seemed like he could not wait to seek help.

“Goodbye!” Lilisse and Raynor bade farewell too.

“Could you tell me your dorm number?” Neela stuck closely to Leylin’s side while whispering into his ear.

Warm air blew into his ear and he felt a little ticklish.

“I’m not in the mood for that! Maybe next time!” Leylin declined. Right now, his body still ached faintly, so how could he be in the mood to do it?

“Alright! I’ll be waiting!” Neela laughed coquettishly and gave him a light peck on the cheek, before running away quickly.

Leylin shook his head and turned around, returning to his dorm.

As he opened his door, he saw that everything in the room had remained the same as before his departure and a feeling of security washed over him as he entered.

“The mission did not even last for a month, so why do I feel like a lot of time has passed?”

Leylin shut the door, placing the cross blade, sack, and other items aside before lying on his bed.

He enjoyed the soothing comfort provided as he rested on the soft bed.

“A.I Chip! Show me my current stats!”

[Beep! Leylin Farlier, Level 2 Acolyte, Knight. Strength: 2.5, Agility: 2.7, Vitality: 3.0, Spiritual Force: 4.2, Magical Power: 4.0. Status: Healthy]

There was an overall increase in the stats; his Strength, Agility and Vitality had all increased by 0.3, while his Spiritual Force increased by 0.1.

“After advancing to a proper Knight, all my stats have risen. As for my Spiritual Force, this is the result after one month of continuous meditation!”

Leylin gazed at the 3D image of him, “A.I Chip, calculate how much more the internal life energy in my body raises my stats.”

After a Knight ignites their internal life energy, there will still be a breakout period for their stats to increase. However, Leylin had already increased his stats plenty through meditation, so the effects may be diminished slightly.

[Establishing task, calculation in progress.....]

[Beep! The simulation has ended. Expected increase in Host's stats: Strength: 0.6, Agility: 0.3, Vitality: 0.1!]

The A.I Chip's voice sounded.

If my stats were at 1.9 like the average person, this internal life energy would be able to raise all my stats by at least 1. However, now that my foundation is so high, raising it will be even more difficult!”

Leylin reasoned.

“The Farlier Family is only a newly established line of Knights. They have no training methods to pass on for after one turns into a

Knight, so I have no inkling of how to advance to a Grand Knight.”

Although there should be information regarding this aspect in the academy, the potential of Knights are much inferior to that of Magi, so I can forgo this goal for now!”

Ever since he entered the academy, Leylin had devoted all his time and effort to his Magus studies and delayed his training to become a Knight.

Even a Grand Knight will only end up as a follower or servant of an official Magus. Besides, a Knight’s journey will end after becoming a Grand Knight. As for Magi, they can continuously advance, so Leylin naturally chose the path with a better prospect.

“Besides advancing to a Knight, this map is the only benefit of my trip outside this time.

Leylin projected the image of a huge map.

Faint blue lines formed the general outline of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy as well as its surroundings. It was even more detailed than the one Kaliweir had.

On this map, the path that Leylin and his party had taken was the clearest. Furthermore, the vicinity of where the Spider Faced Mushrooms had been found was even marked as a dangerous zone.

This map was formed through his own exploration, the scanning

from the A.I Chip, as well as the map that Kaliweir had.

It could not be said to be completely free of mistakes. But this was definitely the most detailed map amongst the acolytes. He would be able to fetch a price of at least 2 Magic Crystals if he were to sell it.

In the centre of the map, green words highlighted the location of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

“From this map, it can be seen that our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is only taking up an insubstantial area in the South Coast. It could also be said to be in a rural area.

“Furthermore, with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy in the centre, the Death Seas would be to the south. To the north, it would be the Mountain Plains of Despair; to the west, Sage Gotham’s Hut; and lastly, the Poolfield Kingdom to the east.

The north and south area are all forbidden regions, with countless dangerous creatures residing within them. Some with differing bloodlines, some of which have been contaminated. They are also haunted by evil spirits that are filled with grievances. Any acolyte stepping foot in those regions would die ten out of ten times.

“As for Sage Gotham’s Hut, it is another faction of the Magi. I have heard that there are some conflicts between Sage Gotham’s Hut and Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, so I can’t go there either.”

“The only one left for acolytes to explore would be the Poolfield Kingdom.”

Leylin thought indifferently. The factions in this world were similar to those of the Japanese during the world war, where various factions were divided in accordance to their territory and they controlled the various kingdoms from the dark.

In these kingdoms, the Magi bloodlines would be either royalty or nobility. As for the Knights, their bloodlines would commonly be those of wealthy families.

“In regards to their social hierarchies, the Magi would be like the feudal lords of the Warring States and the Knights would be the warriors and soldiers serving under them. Furthermore, they don’t have a lone sovereign governing them as a whole; there are as many small kingdoms as there are stars in the sky, fighting solely for their own benefits in a chaotic era.

“There are a few Magi families supporting the Poolfield Kingdom behind the scenes. The kingdom has a total of 19 provinces. Each area is extremely vast, with many small Magi families, wandering Magi, and travellers living there. They would definitely not come to the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy to make any trades, so there should be some kind of small markets over there. I’ll try concealing my identity and heading there to sell my potions!”

Leylin’s Potioneering skills were only average, but with the help of the A.I Chip, his succession rate for brewing had long surpassed his senior Merlin and could even be comparable to that of his mentor, Kroft. However, all of this had to be kept with the utmost

secrecy. As such, Leylin did not dare sell too many of his potions inside the academy.

However, once he advanced to a Level 3 Acolyte, he would reach a bottleneck. Without a vast amount of resources to use, one could only slowly progress with time.

Even a fifth-grade acolyte, without resources, would require at least 3 years advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte!

Leylin was only an average, third-grade acolyte, and could only rely on this bit of income on the surface. To satisfy the requirements for advancement, who knows how long he would have to wait.

“A.I Chip! Simulate the requirements that I need to advance into Level 3 Acolyte!”

[Prerequisites for Level 3 Acolyte: Spiritual Force: 7, mastery of at least 3 spell models, 500 grams of Reactive Elixirs required to aid with breakthrough.]

“Learning the 3 spell models is easy, but the Reactive Elixirs will be troublesome to obtain. I will need at least 500 Magic Crystals!”

Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn. As a Potioneering acolyte, he naturally knew what Reactive Elixirs were. These

potions were not the same as elementary potions like the strength potions or hemostasis potions. However, they required someone to have reached the basic level of Potioneering. There are those which increase Spiritual Force, Vitality, or even potions that can reinforce the mind runes at an alarming rate. The demand is always greater than the supply for them.

“500 Magic Crystals is a little too much. However, after I have finished mastering the elementary Potioneering techniques from Mentor Kroft, I can then start practicing with basic potions. I might only need to purchase 100 Magic Crystals worth of ingredients to make the potions myself.”

“It seems like the most important thing will be to get my Spiritual Force up to 7!” Leylin appeared to be deep in thought, “A.I Chip! According to my current status, how long will it take to meet these prerequisites through meditation?”

[Using the Host's Spiritual Force as a base, simulation in progress!]

[Beep! The simulation has been completed. Estimated time needed: 8 Years 6 Months and 15 Days!]

The A.I Chip responded without any emotions.

“That long?” Leylin’s face turned pale, “What’s the problem? It only took me a little over a year to raise my Spiritual Force to 4.2 from the stats of an ordinary human..... “

[The host has gained a resistance towards meditation, changing to a higher tiered meditation technique is recommended. Another option is to find ingredients that are compatible for raising the effects of meditation!]

The A.I Chip projected a screen, with the various data and results on it.

Chapter 37: Ancient Potions

“According to the A.I Chip’s simulations and extrapolations, the elementary meditation technique is most useful when used to construct mind runes. However, after a Level 2 Acolyte has finished constructing their 24 mind runes, they can only progress slowly with time.....”

“No wonder even fifth-grade acolytes get stuck at the bottleneck to advance to a Level 3 Acolyte!”

Leylin looked at the results of the mathematical formulas and entered into deep thought.

“I have been in the academy for this long, but I haven’t heard of any acolytes who own an advanced meditation technique. Furthermore, the apprentices of the other professors all stop progressing for at least a few years after they have reached Level 2 Acolyte standards. It seems like even the professors can do nothing regarding this matter of meditation techniques, so I can give up on it first!”

“As for the use of ingredients, there was some basic level potion formulas that could help in the raising of Spiritual Force. However, the price for them is rather high and the ingredients are also very costly. Even the results are rather appalling.....”

“However, my succession rate will definitely be higher than other Potioneering Masters because I have the A.I Chip. Therefore, increasing my Spiritual Force with this method is highly feasible!”

Leylin made up his mind. “What’s next is to collect formulas for potions that can raise my Spiritual Force. In addition, I should sell my potions outside and obtain more potion ingredients!”

“However, it seems rather dangerous outside the academy right now, so how am I supposed to go find those black markets or small-scale trading groups?”

Leylin’s brows furrowed again. “With these problems, the professors inside the academy will definitely not sit around and do nothing. The problems will be resolved after a while; I had better get the potion formulas for increasing my Spiritual Force before anything else.”

If the problems outside could not be solved by even the Magi, then Leylin would definitely be at even more of a loss. Thinking this, he soon entered a dream state very quickly.

The next morning, Leylin sought out Professor Kroft.

“A potion formula that can raise Spiritual Force?” Kroft was a little surprised.

“The success rate of brewing these potions is too low and the resources required are extremely expensive. Many Potioneering Masters have lost their family fortunes over this, and only those with a strong family background are able to reap the benefits.....”

Although Leylin's Potioneering talent was highly outstanding, Kroft still felt that his apprentice had set his goals a little too high.

"Sir, you know it too. My aptitude is only third-grade acolyte. For a third-grade acolyte to progress to a Magus, there is an even greater bottleneck. Breaking through to a Magus is easiest when it's done at a young age, so I want to give it a gamble."

Leylin spoke softly.

"Oh..... You!" Kroft sighed and sat down slowly, "I do have a few basic potion formulas for raising Spiritual Force, but I signed a contract preventing me from reselling the formulas when I got them from other parties. As for my own formulas, you are definitely not able to afford them....."

"How many Magic Crystals are they worth?" Leylin's heart sank, but he still asked.

"Haha! I knew you wouldn't give up. 5000 Magic Crystals, and that's only because you're my apprentice!"

"Siii!" Leylin sucked in cold air, and then laughed bitterly, "It seems like I have no hope!"

"Developing a potion formula for raising Spiritual Force requires a Potioneering Master to spend a dozen, or even several dozens, of years on continuous experimentation, and the consumption for this is immense. Moreover, possessing an exclusive formula

usually boosts a Potioneering Master's family development. Hence, it is within reason for potion formulas to be this costly.”

Having a monopoly will yield the greatest profits. Leylin nodded his head slowly.

However, it also depends on who owns the formula. If it was an acolyte instead of a Magus, even Leylin would have harboured some bad notions. However, Kroft was an official Magus, and he had the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy as his patron. Furthermore, his human relations were not bad; hence he did not have many worries.

“However, if you really have this goal, you might not be completely without answers!”

Just as Leylin was prepared to take his leave disappointingly, Kroft spoke these words.

“It seems like I have a chance!” Leylin was secretly elated and hurriedly bowed.

“Although I am unable to give you my personally-developed formulas, I still have a few formulas from the Magi of old, and they were obtained when I went exploring several times before, so you can use them and give it a try!” Kroft said slowly.

“Formulas from the Magi of old?” Leylin felt a little uncertain.

“Indeed! Magi were the most prosperous back in the ancient times. Not only did they construct the Byron empire which spanned over several continents, they had even set their sights on several other distant worlds, conquering different planes one at a time!” Kroft’s face was a little flushed. It seemed as though he held the utmost fascination towards the prowess of the ancient Magi.

“It’s a pity that the Byron Empire collapsed one night, due to some unknown reason, and the legacies of these ancient Magi were lost. We, as Magi in more recent times, have only risen to power through a few remnants of the research and documents left behind by the ancient Magi.....”

Little by little, Kroft spoke of the story behind the scenes. This information was never mentioned in the historical books in the academy.

“I wonder how mighty these ancient Magi were?” Leylin put on a fascinated expression, and asked:

“Those formulas, are they all defective?”

“Indeed! You’re very smart! Although the effects of these formulas are good, many of the ingredients have already ceased to exist. At least, I have never come across them in the 200 years of my life.....”

Kroft said unhurriedly, “However, many Potioneering Masters still feel some affection for these ancient formulas because they all wish to find a substitute for them. Even if they have only a fraction

of the original models, their effects are extremely useful!”

Leylin was elated. With the help of the A.I Chip, he would definitely save a lot of time and effort when researching them.

On the surface, he still put on a frowning and worried expression, “So..... You want me to find substitute ingredients?”

“Indeed! Potioneering Masters often rely on flashes of inspiration for their successes. Many new types of potions are developed on this basis. If you really want to, you can try your luck! However, the success rate will be extremely low!”

Kroft’s face darkened. It seemed as if he was reminded of his past failures.

“Sir! I still want to give it a try. Even if I won’t be able to develop a new formula, I can still improve my skills in brewing!” Leylin gritted his teeth.

“I can rest assured if this is your thinking!” Kroft nodded his head. After rummaging through the shelves behind him, he managed to find some dusty scrolls.

“The formulas of the ancient Magi are all here.”

When Leylin received the scrolls, his hands dipped. They seemed to be made of some unknown material with an extremely high density.

Casually flipping to a green coloured formula sheet, Leylin was intimidated by the numerous scribbles of the ingredients required.

“Ghost Spirit Flower, Seven Leaves Grass..... The poison sac of a Human-Faced Snake.....The hair of a resentful ghost.....”

Leylin had never even heard of over half of the ingredients listed there. As for the remaining one-third, they were precious treasures even to a Magus, and looking at them made Leylin’s eyelids flutter wildly.

“How is it? You’re shocked, right? I had the same expression as you when I first saw them too! However, if you were to brew a potion in accordance with the ingredients listed, I dare say that it would be useful even for an official Magus!” Kroft smiled a little.

Leylin flipped through several other formulas. He tried to find something that would suit the level of an acolyte and would have the easiest to obtain ingredients. A good half an hour later, he had barely managed to sift through and find two.

“I’ll just take these two, the Azure Potion and the Tears of Mary!”

These two potions were better suited to Leylin’s current conditions.

“Alright! These two potion formulas suit you well!” Kroft nodded his head, “Each one is 150 Magic Crystals, so the total would be 300

Magic Crystals!”

Although this was a dozen times cheaper than a potion formula for raising Spiritual Force, Leylin still felt a little heartache. He drew out all of the Magic Crystals in his pockets, and the Magic Crystals clattered and piled up into a small mound in front of Kroft.

Within this mound, there were several pieces with greater energy undulations. These were mid-grade Magic Crystals, and the value of one was equal to ten regular Magic Crystals.

“There are 250 Magic Crystals here, and I’ll add this blade of Snake-Patterned Grass!” Leylin wore a look of reluctance as he drew out a small cloth pouch from his robes. After opening it, there lay a blade of silver-coloured grass. It even had the pattern of a snake’s scales on its surface.

This was something that he commissioned Woon to obtain after a long period of time. However, having extracted a few of its properties, this blade of Snake-Patterned Grass was not very useful to him anymore.

“Oh! Snake-Patterned Grass. Although it is rather damaged, its properties are still intact. I estimate it to be worth about 50 Magic Crystals.” Kroft’s eyes shone as he inspected the blade of silver grass.

“The trade has been established! These two formulas are now yours!” Kroft smiled and nodded his head.

Leylin then pocketed the formulas for the Azure Potion and Tears of Mary and bowed to Kroft, bidding farewell before leaving the room.

“300 Magic Crystals! That was all the income I’ve earned from selling potions this year! The ingredients needed for these two potions are also very precious. I can only hurry and head outside the academy to sell my accumulated potions before I can exchange them for experiment resources.....”

Leylin felt a little heartache. However, his success were way higher than what the others were estimated to have, and apart from selling potions in the academy, he had still managed to amass many other potions. If he were to sell them outside the school, he would definitely earn a huge amount of Magic Crystals!

Ever since he obtained the two potion formulas, Leylin’s mind was filled with ideas on how to earn more Magic Crystals and brew potions.

“Leylin! Leylin!”

A girl’s voice rang and interrupted Leylin from his dazed state.

“It’s you, Bicky! I’m sorry, I was thinking about some things!”

Leylin sized up the girl in front of him. After a year of growth, Bicky’s figure had even grown to be more provocative. Especially

those two perky mounds on her chest, they had already begun to take shape.

“Hmph! Even you are like this! Fayle is the same too!” Bicky pouted.

“Haha!” Leylin glossed over it, “What’s the matter, is Fayle ignoring you again?”

“That’s not it! Fayle has been treating me well recently, and we even had dinner at the dining hall on the second floor yesterday!” Bicky said cheerfully, “Only, he seemed fixated on the academy’s recent mission, the one with blood-red writing, wholeheartedly wanting to claim the reward!”

“500 Magic Crystals, high-grade information, and even an improved spell model. If I wasn’t just a Level 2 Acolyte, I would most likely be tempted too!” Leylin joked.

“What were you thinking earlier?”

“Nothing much, only that selling potions within the academy are rather disadvantageous for me and I want to try selling them outside!” Leylin spoke with a half-truth.

Chapter 38: Nyssa

Regarding the matter of wanting to sell his potions outside the academy, Leylin felt that there was nothing much to hide.

Other Potioneering acolytes were sure to have these thoughts too, but no one would expect Leylin to sell such a surprising amount.

He must conceal his identity when selling the potions, but everything will be fine as long as he is not recognised.

“The acolytes in the academy are indeed clever, keeping the prices down!” Bicky nodded her head. “Why don’t you learn from our senior, Merlin. He signed a contract with a Magus family, where they provide potion ingredients to him for free and will buy all of the potions he makes!”

“I like my freedom!” Leylin shook his head. He knew a little about Merlin’s decision. Merlin had signed a contract with a Magus family. The family would provide huge amounts of ingredients for him to practice brewing and would also provide him with viable resources to aid him in breaking through to an official Magus. But after he becomes a Level 3 Acolyte, Merlin will have to provide a certain number of potions for the family every month. Furthermore, he would have to join the family after becoming an official Magus.

This was how Magus families roped in lowly acolytes.

Without the A.I Chip, Leylin might have embarked on a similar path. Or worse, having no family wanting to take him in because his aptitude was too poor.

“Bicky, your family resides in Poolfield Kingdom if I recall correctly, do you know if there are any markets or places for people to trade their goods?” Leylin asked.

“Of course! However, the situation there is extremely complicated. There are many wandering Magi and fugitives, so it is very chaotic and dangerous!”

“I know, but I don’t have to go there personally. For instance, I could always hire someone to do it for me.” Leylin began to spout nonsense.

“In the academy’s Mission Area, acolytes can also give out missions as long as they have enough Magic Crystals and are able to make a deposit.”

“That’s true! In that case, I will send a copy of the information to your room later!” Bicky nodded after giving it some thought.

“I will be really grateful for that! I’ll buy you a meal in the second level dining hall next time!” Leylin was elated.

“Alright!” Bicky smiled and her two eyes curved into a crescent moon shape.

As time passed, Leylin continued to analyse the two formulas with the A.I Chip's help. He also started to search for Rank 0 spells that could conceal his aura or change his appearance.

Bicky had sent the information regarding the Magus bazaar long ago. However, Leylin did not dare go out until the strange happenings outside the academy were resolved.

In the third level cafeteria that handed out free food, Leylin was eating a meal with Bill. Today's meal consisted of white bread with fish paste, as well as steak and fruit juice.

"What? Perry is dead? But he was a Level 3 Acolyte!" Leylin was a little startled. Perry was a fifth-grade acolyte and also had a good mentor. Four years ago, he had risen to a Level 3 Acolyte and could be said to be an influential figure in the academy.

"That's right! He accepted the mission to investigate the happenings around the academy and even formed a party for it. There was another Level 3 Acolyte in the party too!" Bill's face darkened."

"With a formation like this, only an official Magus could have killed Perry." Leylin surmised. Perry was sure to be carrying a Magic Artifact, and he was one of the strongest among the Level 3 Acolytes, not to mention any powerful, life-saving items his mentor could have given him. And yet he still died, making Leylin even more fearful of the danger surrounding the academy.

“Not necessarily, they might have been overwhelmed by numbers! I heard that when Perry was found, his lower body was missing and his innards were all eaten. At a glance, it’s clear that these are the doings of the Beastmen!”

“Beastmen?” Leylin recalled the contents of a book he had read. According to the book, there were two explanations of their origins. One described them as the failed experiments of a Magus, and the other called them a type of human subspecies.

However, a common point in both explanations was that these Beastmen were extremely savage and cunning.

“Weren’t they always in the Desolate Lands of Despair? Why would they be roaming here? They’re even attacking acolytes; don’t they know that this is simply provocation?” Leylin was a little puzzled.

“The brains of Beastmen were always poorly developed, who knows what they could be thinking. But they have never dared to provoke Magi, otherwise they would have been long extinct.” Bill added.

Whenever the academy’s official Magi go outside, their paths are not blocked, nor do any strange happenings occur. It seems as if these Beastmen concealed themselves in advance.

However, they would attack with all their might whenever they met with an acolyte. It was a standard case of bullying the weak while fearing the strong.

“They won’t be this rampant for much longer! Perry is an apprentice of Professor Harosi. He’s known for worrying about losing face and shielding his shortcomings, so he’ll definitely take action!” Bill said confidently.

One reason why the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy did not take action against those Beastmen was because the Beastmen were too weak and posed no threat whatsoever to an official Magus. On the other hand, they give acolytes a chance to hone their battle skills and gain experience. However, the situation had changed now that an apprentice was dead.

However, Leylin still felt that it was absurd for these Beastmen to suddenly appear in the academy’s vicinity. As with the Spider-Faced Mushroom incident from before, he felt that it was all part of a larger conspiracy.

“However, I’m not the only smart one in this academy. If I can think of it, others are sure to as well. Why are there no rumours as of yet?”

Leylin thought deeply, “This situation is a little odd, I had better make some preparations in advance.”

“Leylin!” A voice called from behind him, and it seemed to be wavering a little. Leylin turned around and saw Guricha, one of the acolytes who had come to the academy with him and possessed the aptitude of a second-grade acolyte. The energy waves radiating from his body showed that he was still a Level 1 Acolyte.

“This is a friend of mine, I’ll take my leave first!” Leylin said to Bill.

“Go do your thing!” Bill smiled.

“Is there a problem?” Leylin walked over to Guricha and asked softly. Guricha was usually a rather reserved person and was always being berated by Kaliweir and the rest, so he seldom hung out with them. There had to be a problem if he sought out Leylin this time.

“This... We do indeed have a problem! Could you come with me for a while?” Guricha asked.

“Alright!” Leylin agreed since he wasn’t doing anything.

“Let’s return to my dorm!” Guricha brought Leylin to his dorm.

Leylin looked at the room number, ‘1913’. It was quite a distance from his dorm, no wonder they did not see each other much.

“Let’s go in! Don’t be too shocked!” Guricha said preemptively.

Leylin inhaled deeply and placed his left hand into his waist pouch before pushing the door open and stepping inside.

Once he entered, a disgusting stench infiltrated his nose. It was

rather similar to a mix of sewerage and the smell of a rotten corpse, and it almost made Leylin puke.

Enduring the sickening stench, Leylin examined Guricha's room. Its layout was similar to his but there was a girl sitting on the bed now, and beside her was a figure wrapped in a black cloak. The stench was coming out from the cloaked figure's body.

"Hello, Dodoria!" Leylin recognised her. She was also someone who came to the academy with him. Her aptitude was even worse than Guricha's, only a first-grade acolyte, and barely qualified as a Level 1 Acolyte even now.

As for the black-robed figure, according to the A.I Chip's scan, their energy waves were a little strange. Sometimes the readings showed that they were not even a Level 1 Acolyte, at times it showed that they were at the peak of a Level 1 Acolyte and could almost advance to a Level 2 Acolyte. Furthermore, the radiation on their body was exceptionally strong.

"Hello, Leylin!" Dodoria forced a smile, but both her eyes were red and puffy, as if she had just cried.

"What exactly is happening?" Leylin felt that the problem lay with this black-robed figure.

As expected, Guricha checked that the door was closed and then, forcing out a smile, he said to Leylin, "You have said hello to Dodoria already, but there is one more person, Nyssa. Do you still remember her?"

“Nyssa?” Naturally, Leylin remembered the little girl who had the aptitude of a first-grade acolyte and got along with Dodoria rather well. She had also come from the same place he did.

“This.....” The black-robed figure was huge and swollen, like an extremely fat person, and even gave off a disgusting odor. It was very difficult for Leylin to link this figure with the petite and pleasant little girl from the past.

“Nyssa, take off your cloak! Leylin is not an outsider! Besides, you still need his help!” Guricha said.

“That’s right!” Dodoria encouraged, sitting by her side.

After listening to the exchange, the black-robed Nyssa hesitated for a while and then slowly took off her cloak.

“Ugh!” Leylin covered his mouth, his eyes wide, looking extremely shocked.

Just how on earth was this a “Person”!

Scars littered her face, and there were even signs of stitches. She had the snout of a pig, her head was bald, she was missing an ear, and had coarsely spaced teeth. A thick, repulsive, yellow fluid continuously flowed out of her mouth. Her facial features looked like they had been messed up by someone and then put back together.

Looking at her appearance, two words surfaced in Leylin's mind: "Suture Freak". Right now, Nyssa's appearance was like someone casually taking parts of a creature's corpse and sewing them together.

With such a horrendous outer appearance, and compared to Leylin's image of how girls normally look like, Leylin finally understood why Nyssa chose to cloak herself in a black robe.

"This.....What is going on exactly?" Leylin's face darkened.

"Do you still remember the additional conditions that we there when we were choosing our mentors?" Guricha reminded.

"You mean to say.....Aiding in the experiments!" Leylin got a shock. He had originally thought that the conditions offered by the professor were too good, and now it turned out to be a trap!

"That's right! We didn't have any Magic Crystals, so the choosing of our mentors was at random. Nyssa was allocated to a professor who specialises in Transfiguration!"

"He treated Nyssa well, not only did he impart her with a lot of knowledge, he even promised her 1 Magic Crystal a month if she participated in his experiments!" Dadoria said, while wiping off the tears in her eyes with a handkerchief from time to time.

"Three days ago, Nyssa was poisoned by the radiation of a spell,

and she has been like this ever since then,” Guricha explained gloomily.

“Human experiments?” Leylin’s heart sank. He knew that there were many Magi in the academy who did human body experiments in secret. However, they seldom operated on their acolytes directly.

“Although there are many Knights and peasants he could have experimented on, acolytes are of good calibre because they have the highest resistance to spells!” Nyssa finally opened her mouth. Her voice was hoarse with old age and even carried a metallic ring to it.

“That’s right!” Guricha continued, “Cough cough..... I, too, have been aiding my professor in many of his experiments. Although there are no irreversible changes yet, a few residual effects are beginning to appear.....”

Chapter 39: Two Methods

“A.I. Chip, examine Guricha!”

Leylin ordered. Immediately, an image of Guricha was projected and Leylin noticed some pathological symptoms in some of his organs, the lungs in particular.

Acolytes are already capable of resisting spells, so how strong would the radiation have to be for an acolyte to be unable to withstand it?

Leylin’s face changed, “What did the academy say about this?”

“What could they say? Nyssa signed a pact with her mentor before the experiment and even declined any compensation!” Ddoria exclaimed as she sobbed.

Leylin was silent. Many low-grade acolytes, with no magic crystals, could only be assigned to different professors randomly. If their luck was good, they would meet professors like Kroft. If their luck was bad and they were to meet with professors who liked to experiment on humans, then they could only blame themselves for being unlucky.

Additionally, many of the acolytes could not resist the enticements from their mentors and would cooperate with them for experiments, so even outcomes like death were a possibility.

A few acolytes would die from experiments in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy each year. In comparison, Nyssa, who was able to keep her life, was much luckier than those who died.

“So why did you look for me? If it’s to help seek revenge or any other justice-related matters, then I’m afraid I won’t be of any help.”

Leylin did not allow any room for negotiation right at the start. To challenge a Magus with the powers of an acolyte, he would only do that if there was water seeping through his brains.

“We don’t have such intentions. We’re just here to let you take a look to determine if there is still hope for Nyssa to recover her original appearance.” Guricha hurriedly shook his hands.

Leylin nodded his head. After all, he had the Potioneering Master, Kroft, standing behind him. If he couldn’t think of anything either, Nyssa could only despair.

“Do you mind if I have a look?” Leylin asked Nyssa.

“I don’t” Nyssa’s voice was extremely soft, almost inaudible.

Leylin walked forward, and the disgusting stench only grew more revolting. Leylin forced himself to pick up Nyssa’s palm.

Every finger was thicker than a carrot, looked purple, and there were disgusting rings of folded skin.

What used to be the dainty white fingers of a lady had turned into this. Leylin believed that if he could not help Nyssa, then she ought to mentally prepare herself.

Leylin pressed the back of Nyssa's hands "Do you feel anything?"

"No!"

"Her defense seems to be pretty good!" Leylin silently appraised, taking out a surgical knife from his waist pouch.

The tip of the gleaming knife was placed on the surface of her palm and pushed into the skin lightly, but it didn't manage to cut through the skin!

Leylin's brows furrowed and he applied more pressure on his hands, using all of his strength as a Knight to push down the tip of the blade. The surgical knife finally pierced Nyssa's skin, and a drop of yellow pus flowed out.

Leylin hurriedly took out a test tube and stored that drop of pus.

After dabbing some hemostasis potion on it, the wound on Nyssa's hand rapidly healed. 10 seconds later, there wasn't a single scar to be seen.

"What monstrous healing abilities!" Leylin gasped inwardly, but

didn't dare say it aloud.

Seeing Dodoria and Guricha, who were staring at him without moving, Leylin laughed.

“Qiadarmo - Xurado” With the incantation, a gust of wind suddenly swept into the room and formed a small whirlwind.

Black mist rose unceasingly as it consolidated into a vague, humanoid shadow in front of Leylin.

Guricha and Dodoria were startled, and even Nyssa retreated several steps back.

“I never thought that he would already be at this level after only 1 year or so. Could there really be no way to remedy the difference between aptitudes?” Guricha looked at Leylin, who was casting a spell, with a complex expression.

Leylin did not pay attention to Guricha in the slightest. Right now, his thoughts were all on the summon that was right in front of him.

“For you!” Leylin spoke in the Byron language and handed over the test tube containing the yellow fluid from Nyssa over to the shadow.

The shadow's eyes glowed red. As it did not have any hands, it directly bit the test tube with its mouth. Crunch!

The test tube broke and the black shadow swallowed the yellow liquid into its stomach.

Hah Hah! When the yellow fluid entered its body, the black shadow seemed to destabilise. It roared loudly, and cold sweat formed on Leylin's forehead.

“Krin - Sidamoersi!” As Leylin continued to chant, he took several dark-green rocks from his pouch and tossed them towards the shadow.

After about 3 to 4 minutes, the black shadow stopped rampaging and spoke to Leylin in several obscure words.

Guricha and the others listened closely, but this language was very unfamiliar to them. It was definitely not the Byron language.

Ever since the ancient times, many Magi organisations have invented their own unique language for magic after many years, so to learn them all is just a pipe-dream.

The black shadow continued to howl, and then disappeared after one final roar.

Looking at the disappearing black shadow, Leylin could not help but to heave a sigh of relief.

“How was it?” Nyssa asked. As it was her own problem, she was the most concerned about it.

“It’s very difficult! Your constitution has already been completely transformed, and there is a huge amount of polluted energy circulating in your body. If not for the fact that you were an acolyte, you would have died long ago!” Leylin shook his head.

After listening to Leylin’s assessment, Nyssa’s eyes dimmed and she retreated back several steps.

“However, it’s not like there are no solutions at all!” Leylin continued.

“What means are there? No matter what the conditions are, I will definitely do my best for Nyssa!” Dodoria clenched her fist.

“Yes, we should think of a way together. Then we’ll be able to solve it eventually!” Guricha cheered on, which made Leylin somewhat speechless.

“The first method is for Nyssa to advance to an official Magus. Magi are able to use the constant radiation to change the way they look. As long as she spends the time, she will definitely be able to change back into her original appearance!”

Leylin said slowly. This kind of remodeling of the physique through radiation required fine tuning from oneself. There was no room for other Magi to help; there would be a huge backlash if

they tried.

“An official Magus? I am only a Level 1 Acolyte right now!” Nyssa’s eyes flashed for a brief instant, but it dulled almost immediately.

“That is too difficult, however, it is also an option. What other methods are there?” Dadoria asked.

“There is only one more method I can think of, which is to use the Harmonious Aqua Regia Potion! It can cleanse Nyssa’s body of the pollutants, after which it would be much easier to remodel her appearance.” Leylin introduced the second method.

“Harmonious Aqua Regia Potion! Heavens! Isn’t that a potion used by Magi? One potion is worth at least 1000 Magic Crystals!” Guricha’s eyes almost popped out from his sockets.

“That’s right! The pollutant in Nyssa’s body is rather severe, only a Magus level potion that can remove radiation will be useful!” Leylin said definitively.

“These are the only two methods that I can think of, but I will also ask my mentor later!”

These two methods were the most optimal of the choices provided by the A.I. Chip, Leylin believed that even Mentor Kroft would not be able to come up with a better idea.

“An official Magus? 1000 Magic Crystals? I will achieve it!” Nyssa’s eyes filled with resolve as she clenched her fists.

“My sincere apologies for not being able to help. Please accept these potions, it will be able to reduce the pain that you feel during midnight!”

Leylin gave a small bow and took out a pink potion from his pouch. He could only do this much.

“How did you know about that?” Nyssa was clearly a little shocked.

“From the reactions given by your body, it seems like the energy particles react the most at midnight, which is also when you will feel the most pain!” Leylin explained calmly.

“Nyssa! Why haven’t you told me this!” Ddoria’s eyes filled with anger once again.

“You have already done enough!” Nyssa replied.

“Take it!” Leylin handed the potion over to Guricha and turned around, walking out of the dorm.

The three people left in the room were as silent as the dead. “What now?” Guricha spoke first.

“An official Magus? This is simply out of reach for us because of our low aptitudes. The acquiring of Magic Crystals to buy a Harmonious Aqua Regia Potion is more realistic!” Dodoria said.

“If the three of us were to pool our resources together, after borrowing some more from others, we would have..... “ Dodoria did not even believe her own words. Acolytes would definitely spend any Magic Crystals they had on knowledge or items to increase their power. No one would simply throw them away.

“No! I wish to try breaking through to an official Magus!” Nyssa said slowly, her words filled with resolve.

“With the blessings of my mentor, this radioactive body’s defense is much higher than an average person’s. My spell resistance isn’t too bad either, I should accept more missions and earn the resources I need to advance! I cannot hold the two of you back any longer.....”

Nyssa forced a smile, but it looked uglier than crying.

“Why? Why did it turn out like this?” Dodoria cried.

Guricha hurriedly embraced her, it seemed like these two had been a couple since long ago.

“Following the plots of the novels from my previous world, shouldn’t I hurry and sell some potions to earn enough money to pay for Nyssa’s treatment? And at the same time, I ought to

advance to a Magus and seek revenge for Nyssa and the like.”

Leylin let his imagination run wild as he walked.

“A pity that this is reality! Nyssa and I can’t even be considered friends, only strangers who have seen each other a few times. Giving her the painkiller potion earlier was already the limit, and that was seeing how we came from the same place!”

“As for Magic Crystals, I don’t even have enough to use for myself, so how could I take them out? One must always pay the price for their own actions!”

Leylin’s gaze turned frosty as he left the dorm area.

He would not do anything else for Nyssa, and she would only depend on herself.

After walking past the flower garden located beside the dorms, sniffing the aroma from the flowers, and basking in the sunlight radiating from the roof, Leylin’s mood became much better.

Walking to a long bench, Leylin sat down and looked at the acolytes walking past, his mind at peace.

“Coming out to bask in the sunlight occasionally is also a type of enjoyment, isn’t it?”

A voice travelled over and a grey robed youth sat beside Leylin.

“Jayden?” Leylin’s eyes opened wide.

[Beep! Jayden. Strength: 1.9, Agility: 2.7, Vitality: 3.1, Spiritual Force: 5.0. Level 2 Acolyte. Energy waves from a low-grade Magic Artifact have been detected from the Target’s body. Target is classified as dangerous!]

The A.I Chip’s scan of Jayden appeared in Leylin’s mind.

Jayden’s Spiritual Force was the highest among the acolytes, and even his Vitality had increased after the constant radiation. Normally, Magus would intentionally increase their Vitality to prepare for future transformations of the body.

Right now, Jayden’s Spiritual Force was higher than Leylin’s. He also carried a Magic Artifact, but no one knew of his battle experience.

“Calculate my chances of winning if I were to fight with Jayden!”

[Simulation beginning. Success rate: 57.82%!]

The A.I. Chip provided the data.

“Only a little over half, it seems like the might of a Magic Artifact is not little. Jayden is no pushover too.”

Chapter 40: A Word Of Advice

After the A.I. Chip's scan, Leylin understood Jayden's strength a little more.

Leylin was considered to have a considerable amount of battle experience amongst the Level 2 Acolytes. As long as his opponent did not have a Magic Artifact, he would have a very high chance of winning.

Jayden had a Magic Artifact, but was still slightly inferior to him. This meant that his battle strength was lower than Leylin's. Even though he had some battle experience, it was not much.

Of course, these were only rough estimations from the A.I. Chip. In reality, fighting has to be viewed from many aspects.

“Jayden, I haven't seen you in such a long time!” Leylin greeted.

Jayden naturally did not know that his stats had been found out by Leylin in just a second. He adjusted his robes and sat by Leylin's side.

He revealed his pale, white face as he raised his head to meet the sunlight.

“I haven't basked in the sunlight for so long. Ever since I started following my mentor, my schedule has revolved around..... meditation, experiments and my studies!”

Jayden stretched his body, looking contented.

“I heard that you are doing pretty well under Kroft!” Jayden said suddenly.

“It’s alright; I’m basically just brewing potions and exchanging them for resources!” Leylin was extremely modest.

“However, you recently went on a mission with Kaliweir, are you going to join that side?” Jayden suddenly smiled, but a cold glint seemed to flash in his eyes.

Leylin was a little speechless. He never thought that this conflict between groups that these kids had formed before was still ongoing. However, he had forgotten that he himself was only a boy of 14 years at this moment.

“We’re all acquaintances, we just did a mission together since we met by coincidence. That’s all!” Although Leylin was not afraid of Jayden, he still felt that it was better to avoid any trouble as much as possible.

Jayden looked at Leylin several times and the A.I. Chip even informed Leylin that his brain waves had been scanned several times. It seemed as though Jayden had actually used a spell to determine if he was speaking the truth.

After some time, Jayden gave a radiant smile.

“I think highly of you! Intelligent! Prudent! Being with Kaliweir and the others will only drag you down. Only by joining a higher circle of friends can you obtain more resources, glory, and even life!”

Jayden got up and continued in an indifferent tone, “Let me give you some advice, hurry up and leave the school!”

“What? Could you clarify that?” Leylin’s heart tightened, as if he had grasped something, and he hurriedly asked.

However, Jayden only smiled, walking away without taking a single glance behind him.

After Jayden’s figure had completely disappeared, Leylin sat back on the bench, a little lost for words.

“Pretending to be mysterious, as if he was a very powerful person, and even trying to convince me to join under his wing. Is that even fun? Does he really think of himself as the main character of a novel?”

“However! Jayden is a fifth-grade acolyte and is deemed highly likely to advance to a Magus. He would definitely be able to obtain news faster than me. I’m afraid that something has really happened!” Leylin’s face darkened.

In a dark room, the fire was dimmed, and a promiscuous atmosphere permeated through the room.

The moaning and shrill cries of a woman sounded, blending together with the constant low panting noises of a man.

After climaxing, the girl lay in the arms of the man, as limp as a bag of soil.

“You’re awesome, just like a lion!” Neela’s expression was hard to make out.

Leylin gently caressed Neela’s bare back and did not say a single word.

He had encountered many things today and urgently needed to take it out on someone, so naturally he looked for Neela.

In this period of time, he had long since hooked up with Neela. In this world, everyone was extremely open-minded about the notion of sex. Many people lost their virginity by the age of 11 or 12. Leylin and Neela both had their sexual needs, so they had already done the deed after only a few days.

In any case, Neela was no longer a virgin. As for Leylin, he himself was a no-good person in his previous life. Both of them desired love and sex, and it wasn’t bad to have a friend with benefits.

With the regulation of the A.I. Chip, he would definitely not leave his seed behind. Naturally, he could mess around to the fullest.

Thinking of this, Leylin felt life stirring below his pants once again.

“Ah!” Neela let off a cry, and Leylin stopped her as she was about to climb on top of him. The corner of Leylin’s lips curved up wickedly, as he pressed Neela’s head downwards.

Neela rolled her eyes at Leylin, but her lips smiled coquettishly as she dived under the blankets.

Leylin let out a satisfied groan and leaned onto the wall slightly. Both of his hands grabbed hold of twin peaks, and he felt the sponge-like sensation transmitting to his hands.

Sometime later, Neela got up and walked towards the washroom stark naked.

While he listened to the provocative beauty humming as she showered, Leylin began to ponder the day’s event.

“I shouldn’t care about Nyssa’s affairs anymore. Although Jayden’s warning was extremely sudden, it has to be treated seriously. This might have something to do with the phenomenon outside the academy. What’s next is to investigate where the other fifth-grade acolytes went.”

In any case, the academy would definitely not forsake those acolytes who had the highest potential to succeed and advance to official Magi. If the academy was safe, they would definitely still be here. However, if they all left the academy with various reasons, it meant that the academy itself would be fraught with danger in the near future.

“Harosi has been cleaning up the area outside the academy since Perry’s death. After he has finished cleaning, it will be the best opportunity!” Leylin’s eyes flashed.

“My dearest, what are you thinking of?”

Neela stuck herself onto Leylin, and two soft mounds pressed against Leylin’s right arm.

“Just thinking about a few things!” Leylin smiled, “Recently Sir Harosi seems to be making a huge ruckus outside the academy!”

“You heard about it too? About Perry?” Neela lay on top of Leylin’s chest and did not make any other movements.

“Yeah! Losing a fifth-grade acolyte genius and a potential Magus, anyone would turn crazy for a period of time!”

Leylin said blandly, “You have your own cliques too, I need you to help me to find out a few things!”

“Neela’s smiled sweetly, “I’ll serve you, my lion king!”

“Don’t call me that! It feels extremely strange! It will make me think of some lion!” Leylin rolled his eyes.

“Alright! Let’s not talk about this, but about something more serious!” Leylin’s face was stern.

Seeing him act this way, Neela also stopped smiling.

Getting close to Leylin was so she could elevate her status and obtain more resources, and she clearly understood this.

“Help me check the results of Harosi’s battle. Also, find out if the academy’s surroundings are completely safe now. Lastly, I want to know where all the fifth-grade acolytes have gone recently!”

Leylin whispered into Neela’s ears.

“I got it!” Neela grabbed Leylin’s head with both hands, “Could it be that something big is going to happen?”

“I hope that it is only my imagination!”

It was the morning of the second day after he had walked out from Neela’s room. Leylin felt extremely refreshed and full of

vigour. It seemed like his venting had indeed helped in curbing his emotional distress suitably.

After thinking for a while, Leylin went for a shower and then headed towards Professor Kroft.

Kroft happened to be brewing a kind of potion. Red-coloured beetles were climbing around inside a test tube, occupying half of the space inside the test tube. It looked rather disgusting.

“You’re here! Is something the matter?”

Kroft watched the test tube closely, as he sprinkled some blue petals into it.

The red-coloured beetles hurriedly gorged on those petals, after which they dissolved and turned into a green-coloured liquid.

A dozen seconds later, the test tube half-filled with the red beetles turned into a green-coloured potion.

“Your skills are really amazing!” Leylin gasped.

“Haha! It’s just practicing!” Kroft shook his head, “You always look for me when you have a problem, so tell me what you want!”

“It’s like this. I, your apprentice, haven’t seen senior Merlin, for some time now. Can I know where he has been?” Leylin inhaled

deeply.

“Merlin?” Kroft’s face had on a mysterious smile, “He has accepted a mission and left the academy already!”

“How long will it last?”

“About 1 to 1.5 years! It’s possible that it may take longer!” Kroft’s tone became sterner, but there was a hint of gratification in it.

“One last question, was the mission suggested by the family supporting senior Merlin?”

As a family that was able to rope in a genius Potioneering acolyte from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, their influence should be at the peak. After all, they had an intricate relationship with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, so their news network might even be more efficient than Kroft’s.

“Yes!” Kroft answered definitively. “You know, there are some things that were agreed on between the academy and me, so I cannot say it directly. But if you are to discover it on your own, then it would be none of my business!”

“However, you don’t need to be too worried. Your talent in Potioneering is only secondary to Merlin’s, and the academy needs a talent like you too!” Kroft comforted him.

“Yes!” Leylin smiled bitterly. It seemed like the academy still

chose to categorise by aptitude grades. Those talented individuals like Jayden and Merlin who were also fifth-grade acolytes had all been given ample time to retreat. But when it came to him, the treatment he received was much inferior. Up until now, he had only received a few obscure hints from his mentor.

As for those whose aptitudes were even worse, they probably wouldn't know what happened even after they were dead.

Although Leylin did not understand too well either, there was one thing that he was certain of! The academy was no longer a safe place to stay!

Once again, Leylin was determined to leave, "So, may I also take up a dispatch mission?"

"You may! Go to the counter of the Mission Area and clarify your intentions. They will be able to understand, since your aptitude isn't too bad and your talent in Potioneer is even more outstanding!"

Kroft nodded his head.

"Thank you, Sir!" Leylin hurriedly bowed. Allowing acolytes to leave was an extremely good thing for them, after all, he did not want to stay in a potential battlefield.

Afterwards, Leylin assisted Kroft in a few more research experiments in Potioneer and also took the opportunity to seek

answers for Nyssa's problem. Unfortunately, Kroft did not have any good methods either.

After bidding farewell to his mentor, Leylin walked outside, "There is only a small family behind Bicky. As for Kaliweir and the others, they aren't fifth-grade acolytes, so they will most likely not receive the news. I'm afraid I will have to drop a few hints for them. As to whether they will understand the message or not, it all depends on their luck!"

In the lavish second-level dining hall, the gorgeous crystal lights sparkled dazzlingly, as numerous musicians performed. Listening to music while tasting delicacies, it was indeed a very enjoyable thing to do.

Furthermore, the food here was all prepared with the utmost care. Not only could they increase one's stats, they could also speed up the meditation process. As such, they have always been welcomed by acolytes and Magi alike.

However, there were very few customers here today. Most of their faces were gloomy, and the sight was rather unappetising.

Leylin sat on a goose feathered coach and pushed a steaming mug towards Neela, "This is hot cocoa, with some grinded black pearls inside it as well. It has also a certain beneficial effect towards meditation, won't you try it?"

Neela, who was sitting opposite him, smiled bitterly, "If it was before, I would still be extremely excited. But now....."

Chapter 41: Making Purchases

Leylin did not feel the slightest bit odd. Despite any pretenses, the atmosphere in the academy was very different with such a huge war imminent. Besides, a large number of talented Magus acolytes going missing would definitely rouse the attention of others as well.

Moreover, the academy didn't seem to want to hide this news. After all, they would still be relying on the official Magi for the upcoming battle, and these acolytes would not be of much help at all.

Those that were left behind would definitely be those with the lowest aptitude and levels, only there to be used as cannon fodder.

“Mentor Harosi has already cleared out the area around the school of Beastmen and any creatures who would pose a problem. They have been all reduced to skeletons by spells, especially the Beastmen, and their souls have been trapped in their bodies to suffer for eternity.....”

Leylin gave a slight nod of his head. It seems like the vicinity of the academy was safe for the moment.

“How about the other Magus potentials?”

“Very troublesome! According to the news that my other sisters have gathered, many of the acolytes with high aptitudes, including Chester and Sherpa, have all left the academy for various reasons.

I'm afraid that it won't be much longer before this news spreads.....What did you find out?"

"My senior, Merlin, already left a few months ago! Furthermore, I, too, will take on a mission and leave soon!"

Leylin blandly spoke of the news he had gathered, and this made Neela's face turn even paler.

"What about you? What are your plans?" Leylin still asked her at the end.

"I plan to return to my family. You know, although my Welter family is not very famous, we are still able to take care of ourselves. Do you want to come with me?" Neela clearly wanted to rope in a talent like Leylin for her family.

"No thanks! I have made plans for myself already!" Leylin smiled, turning her down. He would be subjected to various contracts and restrictions if he joined a family. However, he had too many secrets and was not suited to having an entourage.

The light in Neela's eyes dimmed. Leylin also knew that their relationship had come to an end. After all, they had just been enjoying themselves, but going their separate ways now, in a time of crisis, was very normal.

"There is still something that I have to ask of you!" Leylin took out a black-coloured wooden box and placed it on the dining table.

“What is it?” Neela smiled, but it seemed rather forced.

He opened the black box. Many potions in test tubes were neatly arranged inside, and the sight dazzled Neela’s eyes.

“This is.....” Neela’s mesmerising eyes let off an astonished look.

“These are the potions that I have accumulated until now. Help me sell them off!” Despite crossing his fingers, Leylin’s expression remained calm.

Of course, this was only a small portion of the potions that he had secretly brewed. Saying that it was his accumulation after a year was reasonable; their total value was several hundred Magic Crystals.

Letting Neela sell them for him was because Leylin didn’t want to be conspicuous. On the other hand, it also provided her with a little compensation.

After all, a trace of chauvinism still remained, deep in his heart. Breaking up would require him to give some form of compensation at least, and letting Neela be the middleman gave her a chance to earn some profits.

“No problem! Right now, the values of the various ingredients and spell models have fallen sharply, while potions and low-grade Magic Artifacts have drastically risen in price.” Neela’s eyes

flashed.

This was a normal occurrence. Spell models and other materials would definitely decrease in price whenever war was imminent, as they could not be used to improve one's practical strength immediately. As for the other items that are able to raise one's battle strength, they would be in high demand.

"After selling these potions, just give me 300 Magic Crystals for them!" Leylin sipped the hot cocoa which had been resting on the table.

Neela's expression was a little complicated, "Of course it's possible. In fact, my family could just buy them all! Do you have more? I can let my family know and give you a fair deal....."

"These are all the potions I have accumulated in the past year! You should know, I still need to rely on selling potions to obtain resources. If not for the market doing well right now, I wouldn't let them all go in one breath like I am doing now!" Leylin's expression seemed extremely earnest.

"Alright! I will do my best to help you!" Neela understood. In her eyes, Leylin brewing these potions nonstop and having such a collection was already the limit with his current ability.

As the two of them had their own worries, the meal that followed was not very appetising for the both of them.

After the meal, Neela hurriedly bade farewell to Leylin. Leylin entrusted some people to bring a few messages to the people that he mixed well with as well. He did not mention any details and only gave them subtle hints. Whether or not they could uncover the plot was all up to them.

Neela was extremely fast, and she handed Leylin a pouch of Magic Crystals the very next day.

After giving it some thought, Leylin decided it was better to spend his Magic Crystals while he was still at the academy. After all, he might not be able to find a trading depot outside, and even if he did, the resources there may not be as complete as what the school has.

This departure would most likely last an extended period of time. Leylin made preparations for his advancement outside. He prepared to buy ingredients to brew Reactive Elixirs and spell models available. As for any knowledge that a Level 3 Acolyte might require, it had been stored in the A.I Chip since long ago.

However, the knowledge provided by the professors stopped there. As for the advancement to an official Magus and the basic information for a Level 1 Magus, the knowledge was heavily guarded by the academy. Only Level 3 Acolytes who have signed a contract with them would have the right to access them.

Leylin headed to the spell models' shop first.

“What do you want?” The attitude of the old lady behind the

counter was even more vehement now. However, Leylin's good mood didn't waver. He already knew that those Level 3 Acolytes had failed in advancing to an official Magus and they had signed a contract with the school, to stay behind and provide basic services. Due to the restrictions in the contract, they could not run even if they wanted to. With the impending battle and the collateral damage that would be inflicted upon them, it would be weird if they had a good attitude!

“Apart from Umbra's Hand, I want all of the basic spell models for the Shadow and Dark elements!” Leylin put on a very magnanimous air.

The old lady behind the counter looked at Leylin in surprise. After all, such a wealthy Level 2 Acolyte like him was rarely seen.

“There is a total of 13, for 130 Magic Crystals.”

“I also want the Basic Transfiguration spell model!”

“That'll be 140 Magic Crystals then.” The voice of the old lady sounded from behind the counter.

Leylin nodded his head and poured a bag of Magic Crystals out onto the counter. The lady counted them and put them away, after which she carried 14 spell books over. Each of them was as heavy as a brick, and they stacked up to almost Leylin's height.

“It seems like I should buy some horses as well!”

Leylin hired a few servants and got them to bring the spell model books back into his room, and then he returned to the Trading Area.

At this moment, the Trading Area was one of the few places that were still bustling with people.

The number of acolytes who came here had also increased. Many premium goods had been put up for sale, attracting the attention of numerous acolytes.

“It seems like even the acolytes have noticed.” Leylin mulled.

It was similar to how, in the forest, a small number of animals would sense danger and take flight before a huge disaster befell them, but other animals would naturally follow when they saw the animals leaving, even if they did not sense any danger.

“However, there are still no Magic Artifacts here.” Leylin felt a little depressed. He had always wanted to own a Magic Artifact, but they were just too rare. Moreover, the prices were sky-high, and they would end up in the hands of a Magus every time they appeared. On the occasion that the Magi were dissatisfied with the Magic Artifact, the Level 3 Acolytes would all madly rush forward to grab it. Leylin simply didn’t stand a chance.

“Magic Artifact creation requires Alchemy and Enchanting, and it’s such a profound subject. I don’t even have enough time to focus on my Potioneer studies now!”

Leylin laughed bitterly, even the A.I Chip had a limit to its processing. According to Leylin's previous experience, only when his soul continuously advanced, would the A.I Chip's level increase.

“When I become a Level 3 Acolyte, if I don't have any other means, I will dabble in Enchanting and see if I can create my own Magic Artifact!”

These stalls that had no Magic Artifacts did not attract Leylin in the slightest bit.

However, there were still some unusual happenings. For example, the stalls that were selling potions were filled with people and the sale of bows, arrows, and leather armour was also great. But as for the stalls that sold ingredients, they were rarely frequented.

He walked to Woon's store, which he was familiar with.

Right now, it was crowded with acolytes and they bought any potions that they saw, in a very forthright manner.

Woon was so busy that he was sweating, and had even employed a few acolytes to help him. Such a scene was definitely not common in the past.

Leylin looked around. The potions on the shelves sold very

quickly, many empty shelves were labelled as sold out.

Woox's eyes shone when he saw Leylin. He called an acolyte to fill his position, and especially went to receive Leylin.

“Hey! My dear Leylin, I heard the cries of a skylark today, and I know you will definitely bring good news. So? How many potions? I can give you 10% more than usual!” Woox greeted Leylin cordially and looked at Leylin as if he was looking at a Magic Crystal.

“My apologies.” Leylin waved his hands, “I’ve been busy with missions, so I haven’t been brewing much recently!”

“This is indeed a tragic piece of news!” Woox sighed, “You don’t know how good the market is these days!”

“Alright! Alright! I came here to purchase ingredients.” Leylin said and handed a list of items over to Woox.

After Woox received the slip and looked at the scribbles and quantities required, his face changed and bean-sized sweat droplets begin dripping down.

“So many raw materials! Let me see, White Crystals, Purple Vine Radish Roots, claws of a Ghost Goblin, are you trying to brew a Reaction Elixir?” The fatty asked straightforwardly.

“Yes! Indeed! I want to make preparations for my advancement. If you have any completed Reactive Elixirs in stock right now I’ll

buy them off you. You can set the price!”

Leylin spoke casually, the formulas for the Reactive Elixirs could be found in the library and many people have seen them before. The fatty being able to recognise the ingredients was nothing amazing.

Underneath the Reactive Elixir ingredients, Leylin had also added the many common ingredients needed for the Azure Potion and Tears of Mary. As for the few important ingredients, they have already been extinct in the Magus World for several hundreds of years, so Leylin did not even bother to write them down.

“The brewing of Reactive Elixirs is extremely complicated and the success rate is also very low. The demand for it is so high, and they immediately sell out once they appear. How could I still have stock left?” Woxx shook his head.

“At least, you Potioneering Masters are better off, you can brew whatever potions you need by yourself. I remember that when I was still a Level 2 Acolyte, I committed so many crimes just for a bottle of Reactive Elixir!”

Chapter 42: Leaving Temporarily

“Alright, let’s not talk about this anymore! These ingredients weren’t originally this cheap, but the prices of raw materials have fallen now, so I’ll sell them for 200 Magic Crystals.”

Woox set his price.

Leylin nodded and handed over 20 middle-grade Magic Crystals to Woox.

He then received a huge bundle from Woox, drawing the attention of many onlookers in the vicinity.

Leylin smiled bitterly, carried the bundle on his back, and began casually chatting with Woox.

“So? Have you obtained any news of Magic Artifacts?” Leylin wouldn’t let any chances of rapidly increasing his strength pass him by.

“Of course not!” Woox shook his head quickly, “The prices of Magic Artifacts have recently been driven up wildly. After all, who wouldn’t want to keep their life-saving items and would go sell them?”

Woox suddenly lowered his voice, “Buying so many ingredients and asking about Magic Artifacts, you must have received that news too, right?”

Leylin nodded his head, “I am preparing to take on a long-term mission so I can go out and avoid all of this.”

Woox nodded his head, “Avoiding it will be good, I will also leave in a few days’ time.”

“Even Woox, a Level 3 Acolyte with a Magic Artifact, has to flee!” The compelling feeling in Leylin’s heart only grew stronger, and after exchanging several more lines with Woox, he hurriedly bade farewell and left.

“The mission cannot be put off any longer, I have to leave immediately!”

Although it wasn’t necessary to register for a mission in order to leave, there was still the hurdle of the academy guardians. Leylin still wanted to return to obtain relevant information on Magi, so he would naturally follow these regulations.

In spite of his rather average aptitude, his Potioneering talent had been acknowledged by even Kroft, so the academy would not keep him here to die.

Because Harosi had already done a sweep of the school’s surroundings, the Mission Area managed to regain some of its former liveliness. However, Leylin realised that there were extremely few Level 3 Acolytes upon a closer inspection. Naturally, he knew what this was all about.

“They are all a pitiful bunch of people.” Seeing these low-leveled acolytes splitting mission rewards and working hard to earn money to exchange for information, a pitying look surfaced in Leylin’s eyes.

These were obviously the forsaken ones. Although a lone acolyte would be absolutely helpless against a Magus, they could still cause damage and even kill an official Magus if tens or hundreds of them banded together to execute a formation. That was their role here.

However, being in the vicinity of a Magus fight was extremely dangerous. It was already considered extremely lucky for them to have a 30% survival rate here.

Although Leylin felt pity for them, he still would not mention the news. He had already pushed the limits by hinting to his friends. If he were to publicise the news, even Kroft would not be able to protect him.

Leylin had a look at the missions on the wall; most of them had short durations and were also located very close to the academy. It seemed as though the academy had hidden all the other missions.

When there were few people around, Leylin took the opportunity to quickly head up to the counter.

“What kind of mission did you want?” The reception was a very skinny old man and seemed extremely amiable.

“The missions on the wall don’t suit me at all, are there any special ones? My name is Leylin Farlier, apprentice of Professor Kroft.” Leylin said in a low voice, tossing a small pouch over.

The old fellow hurriedly caught the pouch. After opening it, he smiled. “Of course there are!”

He took out a scroll from underneath the counter, “Look at this. The missions are all written there.”

The black-coloured scroll seemed to be extremely plain. Leylin opened the scroll and quickly skimmed through the missions written on it.

These missions all had a common characteristic. Their difficulties were not high, but their duration was extremely long. In short, the missions let those Magus potentials avoid the imminent calamity.

With the scan of the A.I. Chip, Leylin quickly decided on a mission.

“Investigate the wilting vegetation in Extreme Night Town. Mission duration: 3 Years.”

“I choose this one.” Leylin pointed to the investigation mission and relayed to the old man.

“Extreme Night Town is located in the Eastwood Province of Poolfield Kingdom. You will have to travel through almost half the kingdom before you reach it. Do you want to buy a map?” The old man smiled like a crafty merchant.

“Give me a map!” Although Leylin had a map of his own, it was always good to have another for comparison.

After spending two Magic Crystals, Leylin obtained a brand new map. Not only were the various provinces of Poolfield Kingdom highlighted on it, there was even a red line to mark his journey.

“According to the map, Extreme Night Town is on the eastmost side of Poolfield Kingdom, where the boundary is, and is very far from the academy. But the good thing is that it was near one of the Magi assembly points mentioned in the information Bicky sent, which would make acquiring information and news convenient.”

This was also why Leylin chose this mission.

“This is your exit pass.” The old man handed a red metal card to him. “Don’t lose it, it’s irreplaceable.”

“It seems like the academy has been very strict in governing any entries and exits lately.”

Leylin thought this inwardly, but he did not say anything aloud as he took the metal card.

After walking out of the Mission Area, Leylin went to bid farewell to Kroft, Bicky, and his other friends.

After all, he did not know how long he would be out for. Some things still had to be settled first. Having received Leylin's hint, Bicky was already preparing to return home. As for Kaliweir and the others, however, their complexions were rather bad. They had come from Chernobyl Islands and with no place to return to, Leylin could only pay them lip service and console them.

Pushing his room's door open and seeing the familiar setup, Leylin suddenly felt a little regretful.

"I wonder when I'll be able to return back here."

The spell books and ingredients that he bought today were all lying neatly in a corner, filling up two big chests.

After brooding for a while, Leylin moved his bed away to reveal some floorboards with very little dust on them.

"Farlier!" Leylin gently tapped a black dot on the floor.

Ka-cha! There was a mechanical noise, and the wooden floorboards slowly moved apart to reveal many potions stored in test tubes.

The amount here was at least 10 times more than what he gave to Neela!

If Woon saw this, his eyes might even pop out. Leylin smiled.

This was his private potions collection. With the A.I Chip's help, his success rate has long surpassed what could be expected of others. He had sold a small portion of them, but the bulk of them remained here.

“Let me count! 200 Strength Potions, 150 Antidotes, 180 Hemostasis Potions, and an assortment of other potions, their total value would be at least 3000 Magic Crystals!”

Leylin looked at these potions. They were his greatest asset and had always been locked away beneath his bed. The spell used to secure them was a little magic trick that all Level 2 Acolyte knew. Apart from the owner using their Spiritual Force to open it, any means of forcing it open would only cause the items locked inside to self-destruct!

“Now, with the chests of spell books and the other ingredients acting as the premise, I can move these potions out with very little inconvenience. I will also have to draw some runes on the outside for concealment.”

Leylin opened a small box that was covered in runes. Sponges, silk and other such materials were placed inside to prevent the potions from rolling and being ruined.

After spending almost half the night, Leylin finally managed to move all the potions into the box. He then covered the box with

some ingredients and placed spell books around it.

“It’s already past six!”

After hearing his alarm ring, Leylin switched off the clock in his room.

He hurriedly washed up and brought the two big chests to the highest floor of the academy, where he bought 3 fine, sturdy black horses and a carriage. Leylin took a deep breath and rode the carriage to an elevator-looking mechanism.

“Take out your exit pass!” A man’s voice sounded. Leylin hurriedly took out the red metal card that he received yesterday.

Bang!

The elevator-like mechanism rose slowly and when it finally reached the top, the sound of gears could be heard.

The two stone doors opened, and a beam of resplendent sunlight came shining in.

Leylin squinted his eyes, “The academy indeed has other exits. The original entry must be for people to use as a passage. However, the one here is for large items to go through.”

“Hyaa!” Cracking his whip, he urged the horse carriage forward.

Only then did Leylin realise that his current position was at the back door, right behind the central graveyard that they had entered from in the beginning.

Afraid of being inconvenienced, he had told Bicky and the others that he was preparing to leave in the next few days, but did not specify an exact time. Hence, his departure was a quiet one.

Leylin gave the academy one last glance and then began his journey.

“Alright. Why does my luggage make it seem like I’m escaping from something, not the appearance of someone who is carrying out a mission?”

Leylin could not help but smile bitterly as he looked at the horse carriage he was driving and the heavy chests behind him.

“A.I. Chip! Bring out the map!”

At Leylin’s command, a map came into view. It was more detailed than the one he had gotten from the old man yesterday and had a route carefully marked out.

“Based on the map that I obtained yesterday, compute the most optimal way to travel! Requirements: Convenient and safe! Also, it has to approach as many Magi assembly points as possible!”

Heeding Leylin’s voice, a red line showing the route surfaced on

the map. It was a little different than the one he gotten from the old man. There were several more bends and they were all in the vicinity of Magi gathering places.

“Let’s go!” Leylin followed the route that was given to him by the A.I. Chip and drove the horse carriage forward.

“A.I. Chip! Increase the detection area to the fullest!” Because it was an individual trip, Leylin did not dare to lower his guard at the slightest.

[Mission establishing, beginning detection!]

The A.I. Chip loyally carried out its duties, and a 3D image of the vicinity was constantly projected in front of Leylin.

“The danger is the smallest when it is very close to the academy or very far away. The middle section is the most dangerous part of the journey!” Recently, the Magi protecting the academy had been cleaning up the area, but they were too lazy to pursue the enemies so it was likely that only the middle section would be littered with danger.

However, Leylin could only take a gamble. Harosi had also given them a lesson earlier, so he hoped that his journey would have more smooth sailing. After all, he might not be able to leave even if he wanted to, given enough time.

The horse carriage rapidly dashed on the road and the bird cries on either side of the road decreased from before.

As they got further from the academy, Leylin became more and more tense.

[Beep! Warning! Warning! A high-energy living organism has been detected ahead!]

The A.I. Chip's voice sounded, and a red object was projected onto the screen. There were huge branches constantly spread across the area, with many red spots of lights also floating above it.

“This image? It's a tree?” Leylin placed his hand into his waist pouch and reduced the speed of the carriage.

Chapter 43: Giant Tree Demon

With the horse carriage drawing nearer, the approaching scene entered Leylin's sight.

In the middle of the road, there stood a huge ancient tree.

Its green branches seemed to extend endlessly in all directions, forming a very large canopy with numerous vines hanging down.

On the enormous trunk, there were a pair of eyes and a mouth, and it looked like a human face. However, it had green eyes.

Surrounding the tree were a few winged creatures that were continuously flying around. Their skin was green and they were shaped like a human. They were also stark naked.

"Giant Tree Demon!" Leylin exclaimed. He laughed bitterly, "Didn't the academy clean up the area around the school already? Why is there still such a big fellow here?"

"An acolyte of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?" The huge tree spoke, and the winged creatures growing on its back also turned their eyes to him.

"I am merely a lowly acolyte who is preparing to leave. May I ask if you might give way for passage? I can pay a price for it!"

Leylin made a last attempt.

“Only death awaits any living organisms who try to make any futile attempts to leave!”

The giant tree let off a reverberating noise that even made Leylin’s ear hurt. At the same time, a green vine was slowly lowered, and hanging from it was a human corpse. Its whole body was withered, and it was wearing the grey robes of an Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolyte.

“Big Brother! Stay behind and play with us!”

At this moment, a little sprite that had been flitting around the Giant Tree Demon flew over. To Leylin, it sounded like the very pleasant voice of a girl’s, the sound of her voice intoxicating him. It was as if this voice belonged to his most important person in this world. Gradually, Leylin began to feel that staying here might not be such a bad idea.

[Warning! Warning! The Host is affected by a demonic charm!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice prompted, bringing Leylin out of his hallucination.

“They actually charmed me!” Anger coloured Leylin’s face.

“A.I. Chip! What were the scan results?”

[Shuger Giant Tree Demon. Strength: 5, Agility: 0.5, Vitality: 9.8, Spiritual Force: 3.5. Skills: Leech, Vines]

[Green Tree Sprite. Strength: 0.9, Agility: 2.5, Vitality: 9.8, Spiritual Force: 3.1 Skills: Charming on living creatures]

[Rumours have it that the Green Tree Sprite and the Giant Tree Demon have a mutual relationship. Normally, the Green Tree Sprite will seduce the target into the attack area of the Giant Tree Demon and then the Giant Tree Demon will commence its hunt!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded.

“The Giant Tree Demon’s Strength and Vitality are too high, and its body is extremely huge too. There is simply no way to go around it!” Leylin’s face was calm, “It seems like I can only fight!”

“The first will be you! You actually dared to charm me!”

[Critical point confirmed! Calculating wind power, adjusting trajectory!]

Leylin suddenly raised his hands, and revealed the hidden crossbow as he pulled the trigger.

Xiu! A black line streaked across the air and flew directly into the Green Tree Sprite from earlier.

The arrow pierced the right side of the Green Tree Sprite's chest, causing its eyes to tear. Green fluid, what appeared to be juice from the tree, was flowing out of its chest as it fell onto the ground.

“Dyrisse! That human actually killed Sister Dyrisse!” The enraged and shocked voices of the other Green Tree Sprites came from the treetops.

“You actually dared to kill my daughter!” The Giant Tree Demon let out a furious roar, its huge vines racing towards Leylin.

“Hyaa!” Leylin moved the horse carriage backwards, avoiding the vines.

“According to the A.I. Chip's calculations, the Giant Tree Demon's vine's greatest attack range is only 20 metres! Its movements are also extremely slow, which is its greatest weakness!”

Leylin drew his cross blade and steadied the carriage before getting off.

“I only asked to leave, but since you refuse to listen when talked to nicely, it seems like a fight is the only means of resolving this!”

“You actually killed my lovely Dyrisse! I’m going to turn you into a shriveled corpse and hang you on my body for a hundred years!”

The Giant Tree Demon’s roots emerged from the ground and stood up like a human before chasing Leylin.

“At this speed! Are you kidding?” Leylin laughed loudly and dodged as he clashed with the Giant Tree Demon.

A dark green tree shadow whipped at Leylin, but he dodged by rolling away, easily evading the attack.

Pa! The green vine was like a whip, and it smashed a very huge hole into the ground.

Leylin slashed with the cross blade and chopped at the vines. The silvery white blade had made contact with the surface of the vine, but ended up leaving no more than a mark on it.

Leylin felt a huge force coming towards him, and a few black shadows appeared behind him.



[An attack has appeared from behind. The most optimal way is to turn right for 50 degrees and jump right!]

The A.I. Chip's voice sounded.

Leylin deflected a vine and turned to his right and jumped immediately, avoiding the sneak attack from the black shadow behind him.

“Great Father! We will help you!”

Roughly 7 to 8 Green Tree Sprites swooped down, and they even carried small bows in their hands that looked like toys. However, when Leylin saw the dark green liquid on the arrow head, his expression changed.

“There's poison!”

He withdrew a purple potion from his waist pouch and viciously flung it at the Green Tree Sprites.

Ping-Pong! The test tube broke, and a gust of purple misty smoke rose, turning into the shape of a harpy. The harpy opened its mouth and let out an ear piercing scream!

“The Howling Witch Potion! I spent 20 Magic Crystals on it!” Leylin covered both of his ears. Although he had made

preparations ahead of time, he still felt uneasy. As for the Green Tree Sprites, they had all fallen to the ground long ago.

Using potions to mimic the effects of a magic spell was the normal fighting technique used by a Potioneering Master. With Leylin's current abilities, he could not brew the Howling Witch Potion yet, so this potion had been bought from Kroft instead.

Not only were these potions extremely expensive, they only had a one-time use, which made Leylin's heart ache.

Taking advantage of the fact that the Giant Tree Demon and Green Tree Sprites were still under the effects of the Howling Witch Potion, Leylin hurriedly stepped forward and lunged at them with the cross blade.

“A few Green Tree Sprites were easily cut into two just like this.”

“The eardrums of these Green Tree Sprites are extremely strange and they are more sensitive towards sound waves. However, the Howling Witch Potion was obviously their bane!”

Leylin's eyes flashed, and he stomped on a few more of the Green Tree Sprites who were lying on the ground until they were dead.

“Oh! No! Julie, Delia.....”

The Vitality of the Giant Tree Demon was extremely high and it quickly recovered from the shock caused by the Howling Witch.

Looking at Leylin torturing its daughters to death, it could not help but howl loudly. More of the vines came snaking over, and the remaining Green Tree Sprites were carefully moved and kept amongst the crown of the tree.

“That human’s spells are extremely evil, don’t come out!” The huge tree’s voice buzzed.

“A good chance!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he hurriedly chanted an incantation.

“Acidic Aqua Shot!”

A green-coloured sphere appeared, and with Leylin’s control, it avoided the vines and hit the left eye of the Giant Tree Demon perfectly.

Sssii! White mist rose continuously, and green thick fluid flowed out along with the cries of the Giant Tree Demon accompanying it.

After the white mist dissipated, the Giant Tree Demon’s left eye was completely gone, leaving only a charred hole.

“I will kill you! I will kill you! Hancus will kill you!”

The Giant Tree Demon trembled and the vines around it continuously weaved around, forming a net.

“Who are you speaking to?” At this moment, Leylin had already arrived at the bottom of the tree. Its crown completely blocked the sunlight, leaving only a huge black shadow.

While the Giant Tree Demon was howling, Leylin had already reached the trunk of the tree.

“Go and die!”

The Giant Tree Demon roared, and countless vines interweaved, forming a huge green palm, making a grab at Leylin.

“Goodbye!” Leylin laughed lightly and threw the remaining dozen or so potions at its trunk before taking flight.

Bang! A fiery flame rose up, engulfing the Giant Tree Demon whole. What followed next was an even stronger explosion and black smoke.

“The effect is indeed excellent when using ten explosive potions together. Moreover, it is even more advantageous against a tree type Tree Demon like this!”

Although Leylin ran away quickly, he was still scorched by the flames from behind. Even the hair on his head was tinged and burnt .

“Ah!” The Giant Tree Demon screamed and howled in agony, falling to the ground with a crash, its body still set ablaze.

As for the Green Tree Sprites that were hiding in the treetop, they too were not spared and were all burnt to charcoal.

[Beep! The target has lost all signs of life!]

The A.I. Chip's voice sounded.

Leylin nodded his head and returned to driving the horse carriage, going around the Giant Tree Demon's body.

Looking at the huge branches that were charred and the corpses of those Green Tree Sprites, Leylin suddenly thought of something and went up to extract some of their cells and remnants.

“Only one battle and I have already used almost half of my stockpiled potions!” However, the Giant Tree Demon and Green Tree Sprites combo is a threat to even a Level 3 Acolyte. Having an outcome like this is already considered not bad!”

Afraid of the arrival of reinforcements, Leylin hurriedly drove the horse carriage away, until the three strong horses were frothing in the mouth. Travelling as fast as the wind, he disappeared from the horizon.

Half an hour later, a grey-coloured owl swooped down and landed on top of a branch.

“Hankus is dead!” The owl let out a human’s voice.

“I know, I know!” Suddenly a human face appeared beside the tree branch, “It’s a Level 2 Acolyte, should we chase after him?”

“The plan has already begun! This stupid tree demon totally deserves it for dying here!” The owl pecked the feathers on its body.

“I’ll be leaving first!” Saying which, the owl spread its wings and flew up into the sky.

The human’ face turned silent for a while and then revealed a human-like smile, “Although it’s just a slave, one must still pay the price for killing my subordinates!”

The branch extended to where the Giant Tree Demon lay. At this moment, the fire had already been extinguished, only leaving behind some charred wood and Green Tree Sprite corpses.

Suddenly, a corpse jerked. It was actually still alive.

This Green Tree Sprite was already completely charred. Without any immediate treatment it would definitely lose its life.

The tree branch brought the Green Tree Sprite right in front of the human face, “Do you want to seek revenge?”

“Yes! For.....Vengeance, Doris.....Is willing to pay any price, even if.....It means the soul!” The Green Tree Sprite struggled to speak.

“Haha.....Very well!” The human face laughed loudly, “It just so happens that I have one potion from a previous experiment that ended up in failure. I’ll use it on you then!”

Suddenly an opening appeared on the black-coloured tree, and it enveloped the entire Green Tree Sprite...

Chapter 44: Grey Stone City

Leylin was unaware that there were people planning to deal with him, so he carried on driving the horse carriage and travelling rapidly.

After the fifth day, when the surroundings started to show traces of human activity, he heaved a huge sigh of relief.

Although Magi generally view acolytes in the same way that humans viewed ants, it couldn't be denied that they originated from normal human beings.

Even though human experimentation was continued despite repeated prohibition, especially at the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, all the Magi still chose to avoid large human communities. This prevented human casualties from piling up and inciting the wrath of other Magi.

“Once I reach the city up ahead, I can take a breather!” After 5 days of continuous travel, Leylin and his horses were all extremely exhausted.

At this moment, he lowered the speed of the horse and had a look at his surroundings.

There were now loosely spread fields on either side of him, and not far away was a giant windmill.

A crystal clear stream flowed beside these fields, and there were even some unknown species of fishes swimming in it.

Leylin suddenly felt relaxed as he viewed this scene.

“Serenity! The peaceful world of humans! I have not felt tranquillity like this in a long time

“According to the map, the nearest city should be Grey Stone City!” Leylin looked at the indicator on the map provided by the A.I. Chip in his mind.

“This place is still too close to the academy. There may be a gathering point for Magi nearby, but it still looks far too dangerous to sell potions or ask about the latest news here.”

“Moreover, I keep getting this ominous feeling!” Leylin’s brows furrowed as he looked behind him.

“Will the enemy let me go so easily after killing the Giant Tree Demon?”

[Beep! Transfiguration Spell analysis complete!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded in his mind at that moment.

“That’s great!” There was an elated expression on Leylin’s face. He hurriedly read the introduction of the Transfiguration Spell.

[Transfiguration Spell: Rank 0 spell. Effect: Ability to slightly reconstruct the muscles of the face for an extended period of time. Consumption: 1 Spiritual Force, 1 Magical Power a day]

This was a Rank 0 spell that Leylin specifically chose for concealing his identity.

“Can it only change the outer appearance?” Leylin muttered to himself. “Many Magi can discern someone’s identity through the energy waves emitted by their Spiritual Force and some can even look right into their soul. Of course, these people are all official Magi at least. Right now, it’s most likely that I won’t meet with any of them.”

“A.I. Chip! Is it possible to optimise the effects of the Transfiguration and enhance the concealment of the energy waves from the Spiritual Force?”

Leylin asked.

[Beep! Establishing Spiritual Force energy wave concealment optimisation task, beginning analysis.....]

A dozen odd seconds later, the reply of the A.I. Chip sounded.

[Able to optimise. Requires 7 Spiritual Force points. Time to completion: 14 days 5 hours. Supplemental data required: Spirit Research Studies, Obscure Runes.]

“7 Spiritual Force points? I can achieve that in a few years. However, the information on Spirit Research Studies and Obscure Runes will not be as easy to obtain!”

Research concerning the likes of spirits has always been the most mysterious aspect of the Magus World. Although Abyssal Bone Forest Academy has a reputation for being at the forefront of this field, the academy actually only had a few superficial theories. As for Leylin, he was just a Level 2 Acolyte so he did not have access to such information.

“The Transfiguration Spell should be enough for the time being.” Leylin gazed at his surroundings while driving the horse carriage hurriedly into the small forest nearby.

When Leylin reappeared a moment later, his appearance had changed completely.

His original youthful appearance had now become rather mature. Coupled with thick eyebrows and big eyes, he possessed a very common looking face.

His clothes had also changed into weather-beaten leather armour. The cross blade hanging on his waist buckle also looked older.

Leylin originally had a tall stature and looked well-fed. His body was already that of the typical adult before the change. Looking at him now, he seemed like a skinny yet experienced soldier.

Leylin walked to the side of the stream to get a glimpse of his reflection. “En! Not bad! Even my voice changed and I can modulate its pitch too.”

His voice gradually became coarser, a drastic change from the soft, immature and youthful one from before.

“I will temporarily enter the city in this disguise!” Leylin nodded his head and took out a leather bag. In it was some white powder.

“The Scent-Removing Powder of the Subterranean Blind Worm, just 1 gram can rid any living organism of their scent completely!” Leylin said softly.

“This should be the ultimate disguise method in the mortal world. My appearance and scent have already changed, so it won’t be easy to find me through regular means! But as for the Spiritual Force energy waves, I can’t do anything about them.”

Leylin looked through the horse carriage again. He then threw away any unnecessary items, only keeping the chest filled with

potions and spell books. He also tied the chest filled with ingredients onto one of the two horses.

“Let’s go!” Approaching the last horse, which did not carry any burden, Leylin undid its reins and whipped it.

“Woo!” The black horse whinnied then ran in a random direction.

Subsequently, Leylin went back to the horse carriage and sprinkled a kind of red powder all over it. He followed that up by sprinkling the remaining Scent-Removing Powder over the two horses. He then mounted one of the horses and rode off.

Not long afterwards, black smoke appeared in the forest, followed by a blazing flame.

As he continued along the main road, more and more signs of humans could be seen. After an hour, Leylin saw the silhouette of Grey Stone City.

The walls of the city were short. Circular rooftops and sharp pointed grey buildings could be seen from the outside.

Beside these walls were armed soldiers who were patrolling the area.

“State your purpose.” The patrol leader wearing leather half-armour stopped Leylin.

“I’m a mercenary, and also a merchant!” Leylin smiled. He could see the greed in the patrol leader’s eyes.

Looking at the horse Leylin was riding and the chests behind him, the leader gulped down saliva. His eyes swept over the outfit Leylin wore. When he saw the cross blade hanging from Leylin’s waist, his expression changed to one of fear.

“The fee to entering is one bronze coin!”

“Here you go!” Leylin tossed over a brand new yellow bronze coin to the leader.

“You may enter! Remember not to wander around at night. If you are caught doing so, you will be imprisoned!” The leader revealed a very unsightly smile.

“Thank you!” Leylin brought his luggage through the city gates.

“Leader?” A soldier was obviously unresigned.

“Shut up!” Didn’t you see how he was dressed? Being able to travel solo while carrying goods and arriving in the city unscathed means he is no regular person. Who knows, he might even be a Knight!” The leader growled in a low voice, “Next time, don’t find any trouble with these sorts of people!”

“It seems like no matter where it is, strength can let me pass through easily.”

Leylin rode into the streets of the city. He saw commoners on either side of the streets avoiding him in fear. When they looked at Leylin, their gazes held both a huge amount of fear and envy as they nodded in approval.

“The development of this Grey Stone City does not seem to compare to even one of the small towns from my previous life!”

Leylin estimated that, at most, there were only around 10,000 inhabitants in the whole of Grey Stone City.

As for its standards of living, they were even worse.

The pavements were made of yellow mud and riddled with coarse sand. A slight gust of wind would cause yellow dust to swirl in the air.

Most of the people on the two sides of the road were malnourished and only wore crude grey or black robes that even had a lot of jagged holes in them.

Along these streets were several fences enclosing cattle or sheep. Some small-sized livestock was even running around freely. Odour from the fresh layer of dung continually pervaded the atmosphere, with no sign of dissipating.

“Dirty, messy, lousy!” This was Leylin’s first impression of Grey Stone City.

“Let’s find a place to stay first!” The journey had made him somewhat weary.

Leylin did not manage to find any sort of inn even after searching for some time. In the end, he decided to spend some coppers in exchange for information regarding a place to stay from a local.

“Big Sword and Wine Cup. This is it.” Leylin looked at the words on the signboard and was a little speechless.

This family shop was situated somewhere to the west, where public order seemed to be more chaotic. Along the way, Leylin saw many drunkards and fights breaking out. A knife and dagger were even used in one instance. Despite this, there were no traces of security officers at all.

Pushing the door open, the smell of an inferior wine infiltrated Leylin’s nose.

“Come! Have another cup!” “Nice one, Jack!” A hubbub of noises constantly assaulted Leylin’s eardrums.

The interior was a pub of sorts. There were many drunkards guzzling drinks to their hearts content. Some were even half asleep and drunk, pawing the female hostesses and talking dirty.

“Sir! What would you like?” The bartender was a yellow-haired youth who looked like the soberest one in this pub.

“I heard that I could find a place to stay here?”

Leylin sat at the stool beside the counter.

“Yes! We are the only establishment in the whole of Grey Stone City that provides lodging services!” The bartender shrugged his shoulders, “However, it is nothing to be proud of. We do not have many visitors here all year round!”

“Give me a quiet room and take care of my two horses. How much is it?” Leylin looked at the big barrel behind the bartender.

“Give me your best beer here too!” Leylin tossed a silver coin over.

“Pleased to be at your service!” Very soon, the bartender brought a cup with a handle to the table, “Honey Butter Liquor! Our best liquor here!”

Leylin sipped the liquor while listening to the bartender’s introduction.

In reality, many Magi did not like liquor since it could dull the senses. They preferred drinks that could raise their vigour.

Leylin did not drink often either. However, his curiosity was piqued so he wanted a taste. This Honey Butter Liquor was simply average, though. It even had a tart smell, which made Leylin feel cheated.

“Lodging here for a night would be 30 coppers and taking care of two horses, including their fodder, means an additional twenty coppers!”

Before leaving the academy, Leylin had already changed some pocket change to carry with him. So now, he very forthrightly tossed two silver coins over, “I’ll stay here for 4 nights first.....”

“Look! Such fine horses! This fur colour! This build! They are definitely more valuable than the battle horses in the city lord’s manor!”

A very annoying voice was heard.

Chapter 45: Reconnaissance

Glancing outside, Leylin's brows furrowed. His two horses seemed to have stirred up some trouble.

His lips curled into a sneer as he turned around and quickly left the pub.

Several local hoodlums were surrounding his black horses and sizing them up. Their gazes were marred with greed as they gazed at the spirited horses and the chests on them. One of them was actually in the act of impatiently untying the reins.

“Are you trying to take my belongings?” Leylin strode over.

He looked rather intimidating in his leather armour with his menacing cross blade hanging from his belt. But apparently it was still not enough.

One of them, a cross-eyed hoodlum, shouted at him, “This is undoubtedly the horse that I lost! How come you have it? You stole it from my family, didn't you! You damned thief!”

This gang of crooks thought that even though Leylin was an armed soldier, he wouldn't be able to take on their whole gang.

“That's right! Capture him and bring him to see public security!” The others raucously interjected.

The surrounding inhabitants surreptitiously loathed what was happening. But nobody had the guts to step forward.

“Let’s go! He’s alone!” Cross-Eyed drew a dagger from within his robes and led the attack.

Leylin sneered, “Looks like I get to loosen these creaky joints.” He dodged, avoiding Cross-Eyed’s piercing dagger attack. He immediately grabbed hold of Cross-Eyed’s right wrist and shook it slightly. Cross-Eyed screamed in agony as the dagger fell to the floor.

“Argh! That hurts! What are you doing? Let go of me! My brother-in-law is a public security officer. He won’t let you get away with this!” Cross-Eyed wailed in pain.

“Oh really? Public security officer? I’m so scared!” Leylin cried exaggeratedly, and then he twisted viciously.

Crack! The piercing sound of breaking bones was heard. Cross-Eyed fainted right away from the excruciating pain.

At this moment, Leylin’s physical power had already reached the Knight stage. Against these hoodlums, he naturally did not have to exert much effort.

“Boss! Boss!” The rest of the hoodlums shouted, but none of them dared approach.

Leylin smiled. He turned into a black shadow and dove right into their midst.

Bang! Crack! Argh!

The pitiful cries of the hoodlums and the gut wrenching sound of bones being crushed could be heard continuously. Leylin was like a black gust of wind. In a few moves, he knocked them all onto the ground, each one sporting a broken arm or a broken leg.

Leylin smiled amiably at them and walked towards the spot that Cross-Eyed had fainted at. He raised his foot and stomped viciously on the boss's right leg.

“Argh!” Very soon, the pain jolted him awake. Both his eyes rolled around, and then he fainted once again.

“Take your boss away! You can call on me anytime if you want revenge. But if you ever do, it won't be as simple as getting a broken arm or a broken leg!”

Leylin said to the hoodlums. In their eyes, his smile was like that of a devil's.

After seeing these hoodlums scampering away, Leylin returned to the bar.

“At the least, he has the physical power of a Preparatory Knight!” The bartender groaned inwardly as he put on an even gentler and

humbler expression.

“My most respected sir! Is there anything I can do for you?”

Seeing the deathly quiet that loomed over the pub, Leylin couldn't help but inwardly smile with bitterness.

He did not want to be seen as a monster. However, he had brought many goods along with him, so what could he do if someone were to steal them when he was in the room? Although he left a Tracing Spell on his belongings, if the spell were to disappear, Leylin wouldn't even have a place to cry.

However, after Leylin displayed the strength of a Preparatory Knight, many of those who had some malicious intent towards him quietly retreated.

“Help me bring these chests to my room, put my horses in the stable and give them the best fodder you have!” Leylin said as he tossed another silver coin at the bartender.

“That hoodlum from earlier, what kind of background does he have?”

The bartender lowered his head, “Sir, you completely don't have to worry about it. He may have some shady dealings with a public security officer but nothing too serious, though.”

Having the strength of a Preparatory Knight means having access

to a Knight's training technique.

Such people are either nobility or have some huge power backing them. A small city's public security officer will not dare to do anything at all.

“Take me to my room!” Leylin asked casually

The bartender intentionally took him to a room at the very back of the building, furthest from the pub. He took out a key and opened the room.

A ray of golden sunlight shone through the window into the room

The bed was in the middle of the room, and the bed sheets on it seemed to be very clean. There was a blue vase on the bedside table with some unknown wildflowers in them.

“It seems very clean. This place will be fine!” Leylin nodded.

“Here is your key, please keep it safe!” The bartender respectfully handed over a brass key.

Leylin took the key and sent the bartender away to take care of his horses. He unpacked the contents of the chests and ordered a steak to be sent to his room. After he telling the bartender not to disturb him, he closed the door.

As he closed the wooden door, he found the room's noise cancellation effects to be rather good. The noises from outside were greatly reduced.

“My actions today were a little too eye-catching! I didn't have a choice though. Grey Stone City is too small, the activities of any stranger will definitely arouse unwanted attention. However, it is still much safer to be behind city walls. People will, at least, think twice before casting large area-of-effect spells!”

“Furthermore, there is a 50-50 chance of the faction which sent people to block the path sending someone after me. It'll be best if they haven't. If not, I must definitely kill the next wave of pursuers so I can get away cleanly.”

Leylin was deep in thought, “The Spiritual Force energy waves and the spirit sent to follow the trail look like the doings of an official Magus. But this seems like a waste of resources. Afterall, who would send an official Magus to track down and kill a Level 2 Acolyte?”

“The greatest possibility is a Level 3 Acolyte with a Magic Artifact or some pet reared by a Magus!”

“I should recuperate and remain observant of any activities that are happening while preparing to get rid of the enemy! I also need to cast the Transfiguration Spell daily!”

Leylin thought as he brought a piece of the piping hot steak that

he ordered to his mouth.

The steak's flavour was not bad and Leylin, who was famished, ate it all up in the blink of an eye. When he was done, he asked the bartender to clean up the mess. After the bartender left, Leylin hung a wooden 'Do Not Disturb' sign outside his door and set up a layer of energy particles to act as an early warning alarm system before falling into a deep meditative state.

Meditation is something a Magus has to do regularly. Although the increase in Spiritual Force from this is rather small, Leylin still persevered each and every day.

After toiling for over an hour, Leylin's head slumped and he entered into slumberland.

Outside Grey Stone City, in the air above the scorched woods.

Pss Pss! A green coloured winged creature suddenly swooped down.

"Doris has finally caught a whiff of the enemy's scent!" The Green Tree Sprite Doris retracted its wings and stepped onto the burnt wood with its bare skin with a puzzled expression.

"This is where the scent ends." At this moment, the Green Tree Sprite no longer had the same appearance as before.

Previously, It had merely been the size of a human head. However, Doris was now as big as a 7 or 8-year-old child.

Moreover, the originally pretty face now had layer upon layer of warts marring it. It looked extremely repulsive.

Its mouth was filled with fangs, and its tongue constantly flickered like a snake's.

Its body now had many creases, as well as some strange looking scales.

Originally, Green Tree Sprites were a kind of living creature that represented extreme beauty. Now, no one would link Doris with the Green Tree Sprites.

Doris let out a yell filled with hatred, "Human, you won't be able to escape!" Its tongue flickered. It suddenly spread its wings and flew towards the additional horse that Leylin had released.

In the next two days, Leylin stayed inside, finally recovering his strength and Spiritual Force back to its peak.

"It has been two days already, and they still have not caught up! It seems like it's not an acolyte chasing me or they would have used magic to sniff me out by now! It's probably some slave or creature reared by the Magus!"

Leylin surmised. His movements had been extremely quiet these two days. The only noteworthy event was when the public security officer brought gifts as he paid Leylin a visit. The officer said that he was there to plead for his wife's younger brother. He then tried to ask about Leylin's past, but Leylin only deceived him and did not reveal any information at all.

Later, Leylin changed into black robes and pulled up the hood to cover his face as he jumped out of the window.

In a gloomy and dark alley.

"Sir!" "Sir, you're here!" A few hoodlums, upon seeing Leylin's black robes, immediately came forward to receive him.

"How is it? Have there been any strange happenings around Grey Stone City these past few days?" said a hoarse voice from under the black robes.

"I'll speak first, I'll speak first! In the nearby village, Auntie Sofia's cow gave birth to a two-headed calf. The others all said that it was cursed!"

This was what the hoodlum, who pushed the others away, hurriedly said.

[The target's blood flow has increased by 12.4%. His brain waves appear to be stable. Judgement: It's not a lie!]

The A.I. Chip intoned inside his head.

Leylin nodded his head and tossed a silver coin to the hoodlum.

“It’s my turn now, Uncle Hugo and his son disappeared in the nearby woods while travelling! And traces of a wolf pack have been discovered at the scene!”

These were the hoodlums that Leylin had subdued over the past two days. They were extremely convenient for gathering news.

At first, they tried to give false information to get the reward, but how could Leylin be fooled by an average human like them with the A.I. Chip to help him? He immediately broke the arms of the liar on the spot, shocking everyone present at the time.

Under the coercion of both money and the threat of violence, these hoodlums were very soon, faithfully reporting all the news happening in and around Grey Stone City.

“What did you say, human corpses were discovered? There were also traces of thick green fluids?” Leylin was obviously interested, “Speak clearly and this gold coin is yours!”

A skinny red-haired youth gulped down his saliva, “This is news I just heard. In the mill beside Messi Village, a few corpses were

discovered. All the blood had been sucked dry. Everyone suspects this to be the work of a vampire. The city lord even sent several Knights to investigate!”

“En! Very good!” Leylin asked for the location again and realised that the area was very close to where he had last erased his tracks. He nodded his head and gave the gold coin to the youth. After listening to the rest of the news, he left the alley.

Chapter 46: Ambush

“Based on the latest news and the A.I. Chip’s calculations, the creature sucking the blood of others might be after me!”

“Moreover, it’s tracking me down by smell! Their numbers are unknown, but they shouldn’t exceed two, or there might actually be just one!”

Previously, Leylin got rid of his scent using the Scent-Masking Powder and changed his appearance before he entered the city. He wanted to use the mixed scents of people to conceal his. He would then gather sufficient information about the enemy before planning a counterattack.

Now, it seemed to have paid off pretty well.

“What a pity! My Scent-Masking Powder is almost used up, if not, I would have been able to leave here long ago!” Leylin surmised regretfully.

The Subterranean Blind Worm was a rather rare ingredient used by the Magi, and its price was never cheap. Leylin had spent quite a lot to obtain a small packet of the ingredient before refining it into a Scent-Masking Powder.

However, he had enough for only about 3 or 4 days. Within such a short period, he could not possibly run far. Once the enemy expands the range of detection, his traces would definitely be discovered.

“It’s better to settle this as soon as possible. If they chase me to my destination, then that wouldn’t do me any good!”

Leylin’s face became solemn.

Even now, the effects of the powder were wearing off. He was relying more and more on the complicated mix of smells in the city to mask his scent. Alas, the unknown creatures were still able to trace him even after all he did.

After returning to his room, Leylin casually sat on the bed and mentally called up the A.I. Chip.

“A.I. Chip! In accordance with the news obtained during these past two days, simulate the enemy’s movement patterns, and design a plan for killing them!”

[Beep! Establishing mission parameters, beginning simulation.....Map imported.....The Host’s battle strength imported, analysis in progress.....”]

The A.I. Chip’s icy cold and unfeeling mechanical voice intoned within his mind.

The A.I. Chip was a tool specifically allocated to scientists in his previous world, so how could it have the intelligence or even

emotions? Due to human rights concerns, they had forbidden A.I. Chips from manifesting intelligence and emotion as a core directive in its programming.

[Simulation complete. Host kills the target but will sustain light injuries. Success rate: 67.7%]

The A.I. Chip's voice intoned while transmitting a large amount of information into Leylin's mind.

"Sustain injuries?" Leylin stroked his chin, "Are there any possibilities of killing the target unscathed?"

[Insufficient Data! Requires more detailed information on the target!]

"So it's like this," Leylin shook his head. According to the news he got from the hoodlums, the creature outside the city was already in an enraged mood and had started attacking the locals. At this rate, it would definitely charge into the city within 24 hours.

Although there was a mutual accord among the Magi to not disrupt the lives of the regular humans, there were still some who were crazy enough to do so.

If massive casualties resulted, and his identity was discovered,

Leylin had to take responsibility for the collateral damages, aside from taking into consideration the creatures and the Magi behind them. This was a problem that he clearly did not want.

“67.7%, this is enough for me to take my chances! I also have confidence in being able to retreat fully!” Vehemence marked Leylin’s countenance as he walked out.

The pub’s atmosphere remained as boisterous as ever. Upon seeing Leylin, the bartender went forward and bowed, “Sir, do you have any instructions?”

“Help me find a person.....” Leylin spoke slowly and made his request.

“No problem! Although there aren’t any mercenaries of the sort in this city, there are bandits here. I can contact them on your behalf.”

The bartender said, “By the way, Lord Roland, the city’s lord, sent men over. He wishes to meet you, sir!”

“The city’s lord?” Leylin nodded his head. No matter where a Preparatory Knight went, they would always be warmly greeted and received by lords. If Roland were to know of Leylin’s status as an acolyte, the treatment would be even grander.

“I have something on right now. How about we change to meeting time to the day after tomorrow?” Leylin enquired.

“Of course!”

“Also, the steak that you guys have here isn’t bad, send a serving of it to my room tonight.” Leylin instructed once again.

“As you wish!” The bartender smiled.

The second day, late in the night.

A grey robed figure appeared in the charred woodland nearby.

“Investigate? What is there to investigate here? There aren’t any treasures here. Most likely this was caused by some careless farmer, which resulted in this area going up in a blaze!”

The grey robed man was quite skinny. His movements, though, were rather swift as he continuously rummaged through the piles of charred wood.

“Something isn’t right! These scorch marks were not done by normal flames!” The man’s brows furrowed. His experience as a bandit made him realise something obviously wasn’t right just by looking at the scorch marks.

“This..... Seems to be the doings of mysterious entities.” The

bandit's hair stood on end. As a member of the underground activities, he had only heard of these entities in myths. These stories emphasised the most important things about them: their mysteriousness, their cold-heartedness, and that they were not to be made enemies of!

“I'd better hurry and leave! If I knew this mission was linked to these mysterious entities, I wouldn't have accepted it even if the rewards were dozen-fold!”

The grey robed man trembled and wanted to leave.

“I found it. The smell of my enemy!” At this moment, a hoarse and repugnant voice sounded from behind.

The bandit's body shivered. He saw an abomination, the size of a child, floating in midair.

Its body was strewn with scales in a disorderly fashion. Its face was full of warts. From time to time, its snake-like tongue hissed out.

“I'm afraid that even the devil wouldn't be as ugly as this!” The bandit thought as he jumped back by 5 metres.

“I should have thought of this before! I have actually turned into bait!” The bandit shouted.

“Don't think about leaving!” Doris spat its tongue out and flew

above the bandit, almost immediately with just a few flaps of its wings.

“We can talk about this! I have a lot of information on this mission’s principal!” The bandit yelled in despair.

“Die!”

Doris’s eyes were bloodshot. It did not care about the pleas and screams of the bandit. Immediately, it chewed on the right arm that was waving the dagger about and fed voraciously on the bandit’s blood.

A few minutes later, only the bandit’s shrivelled corpse remained.

“A scent lingers on his robes! That damned acolyte is definitely in the city!” Doris squinted at the silhouette of the city walls.

Xiu!

A black arrow zoomed past. A boom was heard as it went supersonic, directly piercing Doris’ chest.

“The last of the Scent-Masking Powder was wasted here. I even sprinkled some paralysis powder on the bandit’s body. I don’t believe that this arrow won’t hit its target!”

From behind some tall shrubs, Leylin emerged wearing a leather armour and carrying the crossbow he had just used.

“Enemy!” Doris’ face twitched. Its originally repulsive face now even showed veins bulging from it. It was a sight that would definitely make children cry.

“Even I wouldn’t have guessed that the one chasing me was the Green Tree Sprite from before! This originally beautiful creature has now turned into something like this!” Leylin was a little shocked.

[Mutated Green Tree Sprite. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 4.3, Vitality: 3.5, Spiritual Force: 5.5. Abilities unknown!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned the readings and situation over.

“Its attributes were actually raised by this much! What an astonishing spell. However, its body’s unstable condition can slowly be seen on its surface. It is unlikely to survive more than half a month.” Leylin eyes flashed coldly.

“The enemy who murdered my father and sisters! Even if Doris had to betray its soul, Doris will avenge them!”

Doris howled as it yanked the arrow out of its chest. A puddle of green liquid gushed out of the wound.

The green liquid quickly covered the whole chest., A plant root could be seen extending continuously and very soon the wound was suppressed.

“Go to hell!” Doris charged at Leylin in a green blur.

“It actually went through so much mutation that melee attacks are no longer effective?” Leylin nodded his head and snapped his fingers.

“Pa!”

Suddenly, a mud ball rose from the ground, blocking Doris’s path. Its contents were revealed to be crimson coloured potions.

Bang! A flame rose up. The accompanying heat wave even scorched the nearby vegetation.

The flames engulfed Doris and the crackling sound of something being barbequed was heard.

Hu! A green figure emerged from the sea of flames. Its body was scorched black. It even still had the fire burning on it as it charged towards Leylin.

[Target’s speed reduced by 67%!]

Chimed the A.I. Chip.

“It was first affected by the paralysis powder, and then injured by the explosive potions. Even if it specialises in fire resistance, it will definitely still receive damage!”

Leylin’s face was calm. He threw away the crossbow and then drew his cross blade as he charged forward.

“Cross Slash!” The silver cross blade shone. This time, Leylin even circulated his ignited internal Knight energy. The sharp blade reflected a glimmer of light.

When the cross figure directly struck the Green Tree Sprite, immediately a pool of green liquid appeared.

Doris toppled, and Leylin stopped advancing. He looked at the cross blade in his hands and his brows furrowed.

The silver blade was already filled with bumpy spots where the various liquid from Doris’s body splashed.

“Even its bodily fluid has a strong corrosive effect? This cross blade is ruined!” Leylin felt a little rueful. This cross blade had been taken from a noble youth while in the travelling party. It was extremely handy to use, but he never thought that it would be destroyed here.

He threw away the cross blade. As he looked at Doris who was still trying to charge over despite the cross slash on its chest, Leylin quickly chanted an incantation.

“Umbra’s Hand!”

A black-coloured palm rose from Doris’ shadow. It grabbed hold of its ankles and kept them firmly on the ground.

Sssi Sssi! A layer of white mist rose from the black-coloured palm.

“Although Umbra’s Hand has a corrosive effect, it seems like, against the mutated Green Tree Sprite, it is still somewhat lacking! Leylin’s mind quickly worked out the situation.

“I’ll use you as a guinea pig for my newly learnt spell!”

“The sound of the azure thunder! Listen to my command! Descend to the mortal realm and strike my foes down!” (Byron Language)

As Leylin voiced his incantation, silvery-blue lightning suddenly appeared in his hands.

“Go!” Leylin pointed his fingers and dazzling lightning flew towards Doris in an arc.

“Doris is not afraid of death!” At this moment, Doris stretched its hands forward, and its palm split open. From it, a tree root-like object extended out.

Xiu! The tree roots entwined and assumed the shape of a bow. A brown coloured arrow was already loaded onto it.

“Not good!” Leylin hurriedly dodged.

Chapter 47: Inconvenience

Leylin tried to wrest his way out, but an excruciating pain radiated from his shoulders.

[Host has sustained injuries from an arrow! Warning! Warning! High bacteria concentration on the arrowhead, recommend immediate disinfection of the affected area!]

“Damn it!” Leylin hurriedly pulled out the arrow and took a silver dagger from his robes. Gritting his teeth, he gouged out the flesh surrounding the wound.

He hurriedly retrieved a green coloured potion from his waist pouch and poured half of it onto the wound. The other half he emptied into his mouth. Only after hearing the A.I. Chip’s voice, [Crisis under control], did he heave a sigh of relief.

When Leylin was struck by the arrow, Doris had also been struck by the lightning, and had fallen down, crashing onto the ground.

At this moment, Doris’s whole body was charred and its wings were more than half broken.. One of her hands had vanished without any trace of it left behind, and her ankle was still grasped by the Umbra’s Hand spell. Her life force had dropped to a dangerous level. She could die at any moment.

“Revenge! My revenge!” Doris unconsciously kept muttering

those words. Suddenly its eyes flashed coldly, and it bit off its own right leg.

Pa! The leg flew in the air. The Umbra's Hand, which was holding onto the ankle, disappeared quickly as well.

“Let's die together!”

Doris's whole body inflated. Warts on its face vibrated. Her speed tripled as she charged directly at Leylin.

“Damn it!” Leylin pressed down on his shoulder wound and hastily retreated. At the same time, he threw out the last explosive potion.

Bang! An intense explosion reverberated.

Red flames and green liquid mixed together. It let off a dark green firelight.

Leylin rolled back several times before he could finally escape the blast radius.

At this moment, the surroundings were showered with a bunch of green-coloured bones and flesh. It was utterly repulsive.

“Eh?” Looking at the green-coloured remains on the ground, Leylin saw that a yellow fluid swiftly flowed out, continuously

corroding the ground. His expression involuntarily changed, and he hurriedly inspected his body.

A few drops of thick fluid had unknowingly corroded his leather armour and opened several wounds on his body. Around each of these wounds was a patch of yellow that was beginning to numb that area.

[Host is suffering from an unknown secondary pathogenic infection. It has invaded the Host and is spreading at very rapidly. Recommend to take counter measures!]

“A.I. Chip! Scan the injury! Find a way to treat it!”

[Mission parameters established! Scanning.....]

[Beep! Treatment requires 30 grams of Human Head Bird, 500 millilitres of pink ink oil, 50 grams of Green Coconut Rock.....]

The A.I. Chip continued to list down a huge number of items.

“When would I have the time to buy these? A.I. Chip, generate the method for immediate suppression!” Leylin’s face darkened.

[Cauterising the wound with a flame will be effective in reducing the rate of infection!]

The A.I. Chip responded.

“A flame?” Leylin ripped his clothes and casually picked up a burning branch as he placed the glowing flame on his wound.

Sssii! The sound of something being barbecue was heard accompanied by the smell of charring flesh. Leylin’s face contorted in pain.

Minutes later, the A.I. Chip pronounced the treatment effective. Leylin put away the fire and sat limply on the ground panting, cold sweat dripping all over his body.

“The enemy this time was extremely dangerous! Its resistance towards physical and flame attacks was extremely high. Its speed was also fast, and it had a poison attack. It seems to have been prepared specifically against me. If not for the A.I. Chip, I’m afraid.....”

Doris’ body fluids, containing the secondary infection from the arrow’s poison, were something that the A.I. Chip had not factored in. This made Leylin, who expected only mild injuries from the encounter, suffer such a wretched victory.

“On top of that, the explosive potions that I had prepared have all been used! I have to prepare more ingredients again!”

The past few battles, Leylin had highly relied on potions to defeat his enemies. However, the consumption was also huge, and he threw away close to a thousand Magic Crystals in value.

Fortunately, he knew how to brew explosive potions; if not, the cost would have skyrocketed even higher.

“Flame can only temporarily constrain the spreading of the pathogen. I have to buy the necessary ingredients to cure it completely!” Leylin looked at his charred wound, his brows furrowed as he gulped down another Strength Potion before picking himself up and heading back to Grey Stone City.

This was a huge disturbance. It was very likely that the city’s guards already sensed that something was amiss and would very soon send someone over to inspect.

Leylin endured the intense pain and sneaked back inside Grey Stone City. He stealthily took out his chest, not bothering to even bring his two horses along with him. After stealing a light brown coloured horse outside the city walls, he escaped under the cover of night. He was headed towards the Magus market located on the map.

As for the summons of the city lord, it was only natural that he ignored it completely.

A dozen odd days later, on the way to Wolkan Province, a light brown coloured horse could be seen carrying two huge chests with a black robed figure astride its back. The horse was panting heavily as its four hoofs dashed across the ground.

“A.I. Chip! Show me my current status!” Leylin’s body which moved up and down with the horse’s movement, thought inwardly.

[Beep! Leylin Farlier, Level 2 Acolyte, Knight. Strength: 1.3(2.5), Agility: 1.5(2.7), Vitality: 1.0(3.0), Spiritual Force: 4.1(4.4), Magical Power: 4.0. Status: Host is in a weakened state due to infection from the pathogen]

“Although the pathogen was inhibited, it has been a dozen odd days since then. My body is still in a weak condition. Only my Spiritual Force has increased again-this must be due to the result of constant meditation!”

Leylin looked at his stats and smiled bitterly.

Right now he had a completely new face. He had changed from an icy cold soldier into an extremely dashing golden-haired blue eyed westerner. His face, however, was devoid of colour.

“A.I. Chip! Project the mind map!” Leylin looked at the little information he had compiled superimposed onto an extremely detailed map.

“From Bicky’s intelligence gathering, there should be a gathering area for Magi nearby. There, I will be able to buy ingredients to treat this infection!”

Based on half a month of probing and simulation, Leylin surmised that the opponent had only dispatched Doris. Due to the official war with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, nobody could be bothered with a lowly Level 2 Acolyte like himself. This was a great piece of news.

“I can probably even make inquiries about the current situation in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” Leylin made up his mind and left the main road. He quickly found a spot, took out his tent and tools, and went about setting up camp.

“This area seems a little desolate. However, it’s only normal. Magus activities always steer clear of human communities as much as possible. Moreover, the radiation from a Magus is not something that regular humans can withstand.”

Leylin sprinkled some white powder around the tent area to prevent bugs and beasts from approaching. He then picked up a metal pan, poured some stream water into it, and lit a bonfire.

Just as the stream water began to boil, Leylin emerged from the trees and threw some mushrooms and other plants into it.

A moment later, after adding some spices and a few strips of jerky, a fresh fragrance of food permeated the air.

Leylin scooped a bowl for himself. The soup base was white in colour. It felt extremely comforting to drink it while it was hot.

Leylin sighed in contentment, “As expected, food that’s hot is the best. I could almost puke from constantly eating biscuits and jerky.”

The surroundings were dotted with wildflowers, and there was also the sound made by an unknown bird; its cry was much similar to that of a skylark.

“If not for my injury, this would have been perfect!” Leylin finished his meat broth, and adjusted his robes.

Under his clothes, a charred area of flesh had a layer of fine hair growing around it looking like hair on one’s head, which creeped people out.

“Over there, kill him!”

Signs of movement came from the trees nearby. Leylin’s brows furrowed. The shouting gradually became closer. He had a feeling that trouble had come knocking once more.

The bushes nearby split apart as a large guy protecting a nobly dressed young lady rushed out.

When the large guy saw Leylin, he was shocked. He never expected someone had set up camp here. He said with a bitter smile at Leylin, "I'm afraid you'll also be implicated in this."

"Over there, don't let him escape!" A group of armed soldiers in leather armour rushed over. The leader wore an extremely beautiful chainmail.

"This outfit does not seem like something mercenaries or adventurers would wear. These people are most likely the personal retainers of some nobility which is even more troublesome!" Leylin's brows furrowed.

According to the A.I. Chip's scan, this large guy was obviously injured but still had the strength of a Preparatory Knight.

As for the pursuers, the leader was at Knight Level, whereas the soldiers behind were just a little stronger than the average human.

"Who are you?" The leader looked at Leylin.

"I'm just an innocent bystander, please continue and don't bother about me. I haven't seen anything today!" Leylin continued drinking his meat broth.

This casual vibe obviously made the private squad leader

apprehensive since the large guy and young lady stood on the other side.

“Please save us! We are the descendants of Viscount Barrett. If you were to lend us a helping hand, I will definitely remember your kindness, and you will forever have the friendship of the Barrett Family!”

The young lady had a pair of mesmerising blue eyes. At this moment her face had a pleading expression that would most likely move the majority of noble male youths to impulsively swear to fight for her honour.

“Miss Lanning, the Viscount only asks for you to return. Please do not resist!” The leader told the young lady.

“That underhanded and despicable worm, he covets the possessions of my family and poisoned my father to his death. Even if I die I will not go back!”

The young lady poured all of her problems out in one go, sneaking a glance at Leylin from time to time. Although her movements were extremely well concealed, Leylin still saw through it.

“It seems like a struggle of inheritance by a descendant who has failed. By purposefully revealing this conflict, you want to drag me down into this huh?” Leylin shook his head.

“Viscount Sire has not done any of the things you claim. As for the inheritance, it is to be decided after the meeting with the nobles!”

The leader exclaimed loudly.

“I have proof on my body!” The young lady snarled.

“Quick, bring Missy home!” The leader seemed prepared to not negotiate any further.

A few of the commoner troops brandishing their knives and swords charged forward. The large guy roared and shielded the noble young lady.

The large guy’s strength was obviously not bad. Even though he was injured, he still made 5 of these soldiers pay with their lives.

The commoner troops went forward to chop and retrieve the head of the large guy. They then tied the screaming noble young lady up and only then did the leader who had been wary of Leylin give him a suspicious glance.

“It looks like we have been bothering you! Let’s go!”

The leader said as he turned around and prepared to leave.

Chapter 48: Market

“Really? Then why are you still wielding your sword?”

Leylin rose up slowly.

“The secrets of our Sire cannot be heard by anyone else!” The leader brandishes his sword slowly. “Moreover, the wounds on your body is the reason why you cannot lend a hand!”

“Cough cough.....” Leylin coughed feebly, “Accurate discernment! Seems like you have resolved to kill me today? I swear never to reveal a word of today’s matter!”

“Only the dead will keep secrets!” The leader shouted as he slashed at Leylin, his sword reflecting a snow white glint.

Leylin dodged in a rather miserable manner.

The leader’s expression became elated, the muscles on his body bulged, but just as he was about to charge forward, his complexion suddenly changed and he retreated several steps.

Behind him the soldiers and the young lady collapsed weakly onto the ground. Only their eyes could still move. “You actually poisoned us!” The leader snarled in shock.

“As expected of a Knight, you actually have the strength to

withstand it!” Leylin nodded his head. Although with his strength now he could completely massacre this crowd, if there was a more convenient method available, why shouldn’t one use it instead?

The leader threw down his long blade and turned to flee. His speed was actually similar to that of a regular human.

“Under a poisoned state, and yet still having this speed. This is rather remarkable.” Leylin assessed indifferently.

He raised the crossbow, “A.I. Chip! Calculate wind speed and humidity! Adjust trajectory!”

Xiu! A black line pierced through the Knight’s chest. When he saw the arrow that entered from his back and exited his chest bringing blood along with it, fell down with a look of disbelief.

Leylin strode to where the young lady was and towered above her. He stared down then tossed the contents of a bag of powder into her mouth. A moment later, the young lady stood up and stretched her limbs.

“You are..... a Magus?” The young lady looked at Leylin as her eyes filled with curiosity.

“No! Just a Potioneering Master. Shift them all over here and take care of them!” Leylin pointed at the fallen soldiers on the ground.

“Why don’t you do it?” The young lady pursed her lips, but she still shifted the paralysed soldiers over. She even moved the Knight leader and the large guy’s corpse over too.

Afterwards, the young lady’s eyes flashed coldly. She took out a dagger from her robes and stabbed all of these paralysed soldiers to death.

Throughout the whole process, Leylin watched on frostily, as the young lady stabbed her pursuers to death.

“You are definitely a Magus!” The young lady said confidently.

“As long as you help me with my revenge, I will hand over all my prized possessions to you. This includes the inheritance of a Magus. And I also will belong to you!”

The girl said as she unfastened her robes.

“Are you sure that there is a Magus inheritance in your family?” Leylin was rather amused as he asked.

“I swear it upon the honour of my family!” The young lady’s expression was staunch.

[Scanning in process! Target’s bloodflow is rapidly increasing. Unusual brainwave activity detected. Conclusion: Lie - 93.3%]

Looking at the conclusion of the A.I. Chip, Leylin shook his head.

“Why don’t you leave!”

“What?” The young lady was obviously shocked, “You don’t fancy me? I have a lot of prized possessions in my family, you can have anything you like.....”

“Could it be that you have read too many tales about knights in shining armour?” Leylin interrupted her speech.

“In a dense forest, an adventurer chanced upon a princess who was fleeing, and even helped her seek revenge. After overcoming a series of adversities. They triumphed over their enemies. The adventurer obtained the treasures, the love and the admiration of the princess. From then on, they lived happily ever after!”

Leylin recited it in a poetic, bard-like manner.

“It’s merely an empty illusory, full of false promise. At most, I’ll obtain your body and flesh then I have to help you seek revenge against a Viscount who has the backing of a huge faction. Do I look like an idiot to you?”

“But.....” The young lady was obviously still struggling.

“Get lost!” Leylin bellowed.

The young lady got up helplessly. A malicious and poisonous gaze flashed in her eyes, as she prepared to leave.

“Wait!” After the young lady walked for several steps, Leylin’s voice travelled over.

The young lady, looking gleeful, turned around.

Xiu! An arrow bore through the beautiful face of the young lady, and pinned her to the tree right behind her.

“Actually I could have let you go, but I saw a malicious and raging intent in your eyes!” Leylin gradually sighed. “To a person who had always protected and followed you, you did not even bother to bury his corpse before leaving. From this it can be seen that you are a brazen ingrate.”

“Moreover, to get your revenge, you contemplated some sort of reprisal against me. You will definitely announce this matter today to everyone. Although I am not afraid of trouble, I detest such inconveniences very much.....”

“With these many reasons, why would I still let you go?”

Leylin pulled out the arrow and heaped the corpse of the young lady, who died with a grievance, together with the others.

From his bag he withdrew a yellow coloured potion, and poured it on the wound of a corpse. Sssii! Soon, the corpse putrefied into a puddle of yellow viscous liquid.

Leylin did the same thing for the rest of the corpses, destroying them all completely.

Moments later, the area surrounding the camp, had only a puddle of yellow water left. The large guy, the young lady and the pursuing soldiers, all of them, had disappeared with nary a trace.

These potions that could putrefy corpses, and the paralysis powder-all were Leylin's inventions, done when he was bored. Although they do not have much effect against a Magus, or even an acolyte, it was still extremely effective against normal humans.

“Right now, the most important thing still is to get enough ingredients to treat my wounds. Anything else would just be an inconvenience!”

Leylin sighed, “What a waste of a newly erected campground.”

Leylin packed his things once more, and erased any sign of his existence, before disappearing into the woods.

Nighttime, on the outskirts of a densely packed forest.

A figure, fully draped in black robes and even had on a conical bamboo hat to conceal its face, appeared.

“Lost Forest, it’s here!” Leylin took in his surroundings and compared it again with his map. Without turning around, he entered the darkness.

His leather shoes stepped on the dried twigs, which let out a Chi-Chi sound. In the darkness, it sounded even eerier than normal.

“A.I. Chip, initiate area scan!”

[Beep! Slight illusionary field discovered! Field Effect: Regular humans who enter will be baffled, walk around in circles, and eventually leave unknowingly.]

“Indeed, no wonder there are tales of ghosts and demons in here. There are often news about humans going missing.” Although they were under the illusion, if any Magus met an unsuspecting victim, they wouldn’t mind having another sampling for their experiments.

“Hello! Acolyte! Welcome to the Magus Market!”

A black figure leapt down lightly from atop a tree and landed on a broken gravestone. Its eyes were gleaming with a dark green light.

Leylin walked closer, and discovered it to be a black cat.

“A Magus’ companion? A modulated organism? Or the result of a spell?” Leylin thought inwardly. He then bowed slightly.

“I am a wandering acolyte who heard that the market here is open to any Magus, is that correct?”

“Indeed, this market is governed by the mighty Walker Family. Moreover, it promises that every Magus who enters will be ensured safety and protection. Of course, that is only within the perimeters of the market!” The black cat licked its paws as it let off a human-like snigger.

“Then, I wish to enter!”

“All acolytes have to pay a fee of 1 Magic Crystal! It’s free for all Magi!”

“Here!” Leylin nodded his head, and tossed over a low grade Magic Crystal over.

The black cat caught it in its mouth, turned around and while leaping away from the gravestone, it made a beckoning gesture towards Leylin.

Leylin shrugged and followed it.

The further in they got, the denser the white mist became. However there was a road under their feet that seemed to be specially constructed before.

“We’re here!” Along with the black cat’s voice, the mist ahead dissipated and boisterous clamouring sounds could be heard. This made Leylin feel like he had returned to his academy’s Trading Area.

The only difference was that the people here were all tightly wrapped in cloaks or grey robes, not revealing any piece of their skin at all.

Occasionally, some did not bother about concealing their identity, which made Leylin broaden his horizons.

In here were some Marine species who had scales on them, and Half-Beastmen who had fur on their necks. They were different from Beastmen, since they were rather a loving and affectionate of species. There Magi could be produced too, and Leylin even saw a Magus with the head of an owl.

A large number of these people also exuded the energy waves of acolytes, but Leylin felt that their aura reeked of blood.

“Although the acolytes in the outside world do not have a firm foundation compared to those in the academies, they are able to advance in an environment where resources are scarce. Their experiences must be bountiful, and they even may be more adept at fighting!” Leylin’s heart sank.

The potions in his hands were almost consumed, and right now he was at the most a stronger acolyte amongst the Level 2 Acolytes, having barely enough strength for self-preservation. If he were to reveal the potions he was carrying, these acolytes would swarm around him like crocodiles and rip him to shreds.

Lowering his head, he found that the black cat had vanished completely.

“Sir! Do you need a guide? I only ask for 1 Magic Crystal!” A rather skinny little boy ran over.

He had the energy waves of a Level 1 Acolyte coming from his body., Even though his face was extremely thin, his eyes were very lively.

“Bring me around to have a look!”

“Alright!” The boy was in glee as he hurriedly ran in front of Leylin to lead the way.

“This market is under the protection of the Walker Family, a well-received family by both wandering acolytes and Magi alike. Look over there, the wooden hut in the centre is a shop personally set up by the Walker Family.

The small boy tried his best to fulfil his duties as a guide.

“So these are other people’s stalls?” Leylin pointed at the acolytes displaying their goods on the floor. Their goods were much better than those in the academy, and of course, more of them were counterfeits too.

“Yes, you only need to settle the procedures in the central hall, pay the fees, and then you’ll be able to obtain a place to set up your stall!” The little boy nodded, “Sir, is there anything that you’d wish to sell? The Walker Family also provides consignment services.”

“I’m not in a hurry now. Bring me to the centremost area for a walk!” Leylin said.

In this Magus Market, he discovered several official Magi with activated defensive force fields surrounding them. These are existences he could not fight against right now, so he was more cautious than usual.

“This is the smithy! It specialises in selling weapons! Next to it, with the sign which has a test tube on it, is a Potioneering shop. On the far left is an auction house. From time to time, they have a few premium goods!” The little boy was extremely familiar with this place.

“An auction house? Then will they have the information about Magic Artifacts?” Leylin casually asked. He was a little more interested now.

Chapter 49: Recovery

“Magic Artifact?”

The little boy shook his head, “That is a very precious item! Last year the auction only sold one low-grade Magic Artifact. There were even official Magi present who joined the bidding.....”

“So it’s like this. Take me to the weapons shop!”

Leylin followed the little boy to where the blacksmith’s smithy was.

“Hey! Big Bearded Old Man, I brought you some business!” Once the little boy entered the forge he started shouting loudly.

“I’ll be right there!” The shop owner did indeed have a thick and bushy beard. He was not tall, but the muscles on his arm were extremely hard and gave an impression of power.

“Greetings, esteemed guest! I am the owner of this smithy, please call me Black Hammer!” The shop owner introduced himself.

“I need a cross blade!” Leylin spoke of his intentions. Previously, he had ruined his cross blade when fighting the mutated Green Tree Sprite. He now wanted a better quality one, something that wasn’t easy to obtain.

“A cross blade huh, follow me.” Black Hammer undid the wine flagon hanging on his waist and took a sip. The scent of alcohol wafted out.

“Oh! Haven’t I told you to tone down your drinking?” The little boy frowned as he pinched his nose.

“Hiccup.....Edgar, you are still a child and cannot appreciate the absolute bliss of fine tasting wine!” Black Hammer shook his head and led Leylin to a wooden shelf.

“My shop’s finished cross blades are all here. Please take your pick. Of course, if it isn’t satisfactory, you can have one custom made, as for the price.....”

When he spoke of the price, Black Hammer’s words were extremely clear. He did not seem even a little bit drunk.

Leylin casually scrutinized the cross blades on the wooden shelf. These blades obviously already went through the rigors of war. Their silver surface emanated a bloodthirsty aura.

Leylin casually picked one up. It had an intricate yet sturdy feel that tingled into his palms that felt rather heavy.

“A finely smithed steel blade. It even has a metallic star smelted onto it. The hilt is wrapped in black silk, to prevent it from slipping through one’s hands.....” Black Hammer described the item.

Leylin nodded his head and placed the cross blade back on the yellow wooden shelf, then picked up another one.

This cross blade's exterior was a little darkened. It let out a solid reliable aura.

"A blade made of alloy. It has been modified before. Able to resist corrosion and flames!"

"Oh?" Leylin was a little moved, "Can it deflect a Magus' spell?"

"Of course not!" Black Hammer shook his head immediately. "To resist a spell, there should be runes inscribed on the blade at the very least. Moreover, it has to be compounded using precious materials from an Alchemist. Such a blade would already be considered a Magic Artifact, and wouldn't be displayed in the open like this for sale....."

"My apologies, I have been too greedy!" Leylin shook his head.

Picking up the black blade, "I want this, and prepare another 20 crossbow bolts for me....."

"Alright, the price is....." Black Hammer's eyes shone. He did not bother to drink his wine anymore.

When Leylin and the little boy walked out of the weapons shop,

Leylin hung the cross blade from his waist, at the same time he took a Magic Crystal and tossed it over to the small boy.

“This is your remuneration for today! I wish to walk alone now!”

“Alright! Have a good day!” The little boy was extremely delighted and put away the Magic Crystal before trotting off.

Leylin stood rooted to the spot until the little boy could no longer be seen. Only then did he turn back to the stalls he had first went in, where the goods were lying on the ground.

After browsing for a bit, Leylin visited every wooden shop found in the central area. Only then did Leylin walk into the shop with the test tube sign.

“Sir, how may I assist you?” spoke a young male staff who wore a fashionable western style suit.

Leylin looked at the potions on the shelves. These sparkling potions radiated various colours. The transparent glass counter also displayed various precious ingredients.

“It seems like this shop’s goods are a little better than fatty Woxx’s!” Leylin nodded his head in approval.

“I will need the feathers of a flamingo, eyeballs of multi-tailed owl, feather from a Human Head Bird, Pink Ink Oil, Green Coconut Rock.....”

Leylin hurriedly listed his items. These were all ingredients needed to treat his injuries, to make explosive potions and formulate other basic potions.

The staff quietly listened until Leylin finished speaking before bowing and saying, “My apologies, but may I ask if you are a Potioneering Master?”

“I have a little bit of knowledge in the field!” Leylin’s facial features were concealed by the hood of his the cloak. Thus, the staff was unable to discern his expressions.

“Our Walker Family wholeheartedly invites you to join our family. The terms we offer are the absolute best amongst Magi families of equal ranking” The staff bowed even deeper.

Leylin did expect this a little. Potioneering Masters were a difficult breed to raise. Plus, Magi cannot do without potions so Magi Families have always tried to recruit them by offering generous remuneration.

He would definitely not be able to conceal his identity as a Potioneering Master if he were to buy raw ingredients. However, as long as no one discovers his talent, he wasn’t afraid of letting them know. After all, as long as he was not found out, others would not know if the person standing before them was a Potioneering Master or an acolyte.

“I will give this some consideration. Do you have the ingredients

I listed earlier?” Leylin said with a raspy voice.

“We do have 2 flamingo feathers. As for eyeballs of the multi-tailed owl, we still have a pair left. However, it has been around for 3 years, so some of its medicinal properties have spoiled a little. As for the feathers from a Human Head Bird, Pink Ink Oil, Green Coconut Rock, we have them here, also.....”

The staff seemed to remember every item in the shop from memory and blurted them all out.

Leylin nodded his head. A Magus’ main cultivation is Spiritual Force. After advancing, their brains will also develop. Hence, all Magi were intelligent people. As for Leylin’s conjecture, when Magi have advanced into a higher realm, their brains would even be comparable to the processing abilities of the A.I. Chip.

“I want all of them, name your price!” Leylin nodded his head.

“The total amounts to 157 Magic Crystals!” The staff smiled.

Leylin nodded his head and took out a small box, which he had prepared earlier, from his robes. After opening, one could see that it was densely packed with cyan-coloured potions.

“Look, these are all strength potions!” Leylin took out the strength potions and lay them in front of the front of the staff.

Strength potions were one of the basic potions. In fact, most of

the Potioneering acolytes chose to brew it first. After seeing this, the staff became evidently disappointed.

But he quickly recovered his composure and began to inspect.

“30 Strength Potions, I can give you 130 Magic Crystals for them,” the staff said.

Leylin approved silently. If he were to sell these at Woox’s, he would have gotten 120 Magic Crystals at most. Prices outside were indeed higher, but it was more dangerous too.

“Okay!” Leylin counted another 27 Magic Crystals and handed them to the staff.

“Bring me the materials I ordered!”

“Okay, give me a moment!” The staff put away the potions and Magic Crystals before swiftly running to the back.

Leylin waited for what seemed like another dozen minutes before the staff returned with a small wooden chest, which he placed in front of Leylin.

“These are the goods you requested, please inspect them!”

Leylin opened the small wooden chest. It was compartmentalised using wooden trays, where various ingredients were placed on

them. There were colourful feathers, green-coloured rocks, and various coloured powders.

Leylin fingers traced the various ingredients, “A.I. Chip! Inspect.....”

After the A.I. Chip indicated that all the ingredients were up to standard, only then did Leylin keep the wooden chest. He then rose to leave the Potion Shop.

“What I’m selling is only the most basic of Strength Potion, and to gather the ingredients is already this complicated. Even I cannot guess the uses of these ingredients completely. They will definitely not be able to as well.”

Leylin hid the small wooden chest beneath his robes and circled around a few times before he slowly left the market.

“The most important thing is, my trades only cost around 100 Magic Crystals. If the Walker Family was stirred because of this paltry amount, then their reputation would have long since gone bad!”

On the way, he increased the A.I. Chip’s detection area to the maximum. Only after confirming that no one was following him did Leylin leave the Lost Forest.

Ever since the earlier incident, Leylin moved camp. Right now he sheltered in a cave. As for its previous owner, a Black Bear, it had

long since become Leylin's dinner.

Bang!

Leylin stacked a few large boxes together to form a simple experiment table. Then, he placed his apparatus on it.

"I am finally going to be rid of this damned pathogen!" Leylin gritted his teeth, "Every day I have to cauterise this wound. With the limitations of my Vitality and Strength, I've had enough of it!"

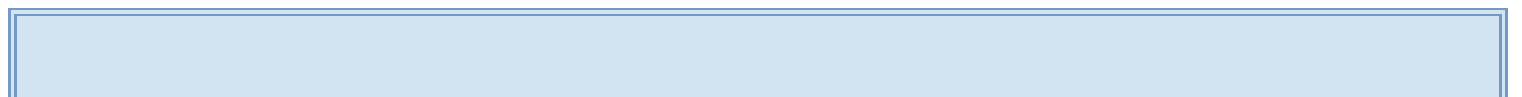
Leylin picked up a green-coloured rock with the shape of a leaf on its surface.

This was a Green Coconut Rock, a rare half plant half mineral commodity.

Smashing the Green Coconut Rock apart, Leylin took the Pink Ink Oil and heated it. When it began to bubble, he added the grounded Green Coconut Rock powder.

Sssii! As the powdered Green Coconut Rock was poured onto the Pink Ink Oil, a hissing sound was let off.

The Pink Ink Oil turned green in a moment. It released a strangely fragrant odor.



[Potion successfully brewed!]

Upon hearing the A.I. Chip's confirmation, Leylin nodded his head slightly.

He stripped all his clothes off. All sorts of burns and scars could be seen littering his body. His shoulder and stomach each had an extremely horrifying scar with tufts of hair growing around them.

“Qiesiter - Kesi!” Leylin murmured an incantation.

The green-coloured potion in the test tube immediately boiled, and continued to evaporate, making the smell in the air more concentrated.

Sssii! As if having been granted a life of its own, the hairs around Leylin's wounds started climbing out and wiggled their way into the test tube.

“Wu!” Leylin gritted his teeth and let these hairs make their way out as they pleased.

A dozen minutes later, Leylin's wound no longer had black hair around it. As for the test tube, it transformed into a ball of hair.

Leylin's expression remained apathetic as he wiped off his cold sweat. He lit a feather on fire and threw it onto the ball of hair.

“Boohoo.....”

Green flames rose and mimicked the crying sound of a female, which was rather similar to Doris’ voice.

Many strands of hair tried to escape, but they were trapped by Leylin within a ball of milky white substance. They had no option but burn into oblivion.

Chapter 50: Ellinel Market

After the green flames died down, what was left behind was a pile of white dust.

Leylin's expression was extremely solemn as he lightly dabbed on the dust. Hu! The dust swirled in the air, transforming into a female's face, "Enemy! Enemy!"

"This pathogen contains the poison of an aggrieved soul, no wonder it is so strong!" Leylin shook his head, took out a green-coloured potion, and splashed it onto that female face.

Sssii! The human face rapidly turned into white mist, vanishing completely into thin air.

"A.I. Chip, initiate scan!" Leylin ordered.

[Beep! Scan complete. Result: Pathogen in Host body has been completely eradicated!]

Hearing the A.I. Chip, Leylin's face finally revealed his relief.

He stretched lazily and touched the scars on his body, "It's a little unsightly! If Neela were to see these, what would her expression be like?"

After rummaging through the big chest, he found a potion and downed it.

A dozen minutes later, Leylin's superficial layer of skin quivered and forced out the layer of scars and dead skin replacing them with glossier skin.

“Once I got rid of the pathogen, healing the scars on my skin is just a matter of a few potions!”

Leylin touched the scars which were extremely faded now, “I estimate that after one more dose, these will be completely gone!”

Leylin then took out the remainder of the unfortunate black bear's paw and rewarded himself with a good meal.

While eating and drinking until he was full, the sky outside had already dimmed. Leylin lit a small fire inside the cave and began to think of the journey ahead.

“Doris has finally been disposed of. There aren't any pursuers remaining so I can rest easy while travelling!”

“The academy's mission isn't really important. After all, I have 3 years to complete it. I wonder how the academy is faring right now?” Although Leylin could enquire about news concerning Abyssal Bone Forest Academy in the market today, he did not dare to.

Who knows if there might be spies around. If he were to expose his identity, wouldn't that be like walking right into a trap?

He could only wait till he journeyed through half the kingdom before he could safely begin making inquiries.

Such a huge matter will definitely be a hot topic at Magi gathering points. He only has to be careful not to expose any information about himself.

"All of these could be dealt with later, what's important is to hurry and change all the potions into Magic Crystals. It is simply too inconvenient to lug all these huge chests around!"

Leylin patted the solid hard wooden chest. He thought of the miserable brown horse days ago that seemed like it would die anytime. He smiled bitterly.

"I can't go to the Walker Family's market anymore. After all, I have just sold a number of potions there!"

Leylin mentally called up the map and located his current position.

"From the academy to Eastwoods Province, I have to travel through 5 other provinces. I can sell potions along the way. At best, I can only sell potions until Jersha Province.

On the map, the Jersha Province was midway to his destination

There were two more provinces separating Eastwoods Province from it.

If he were to sell his potions all the way to Eastwoods Province, wouldn't that mean giving away his itinerary and purpose? Leylin wouldn't be so foolish as to do that.

Although he sold his goods along the way, others may not be able to discover it. After all, the trades done every day were numerous. Leylin, however, would rather be a little more cautious in safeguarding his tracks.

As for Jersha Province, it was in the central region of Poolfield Kingdom and was accessible from all sides. Other people would not be able to guess Leylin's destination at all.

“En!” Anyway, there is still time. If it's necessary I can reroute to further locations. In any case, I must be careful never to reveal my identity!”

Leylin looked the points marked as Magi gathering spots and entered into deep thought.....

Two odd months passed.

On a path to Jersha Province, a sturdily built black horse carrying a wooden chest and a black robed man could be seen cantering along.

The black robed man had bright red hair, and was extremely handsome.

This was naturally Leylin in disguise.

Ever since that time, as Leylin journeyed, he found some Magi gathering points or some small scale trading sites time to time, where he sold the potions he brewed.

As he only sold a few each time, he did not attract the avarice of other experts. Occasionally, some foolish acolyte blinded by greed would waylay him, but they were completely not his match at all. The most dangerous instance was when a Level 3 Acolyte brought a group of other acolytes to surround him. Still, Leylin managed to evade them with the help of the A.I. Chip's detection capability.

Through these trades, he acquired a few precious materials, and many books on specialised Magi knowledge, greatly enhancing the data bank of the A.I. Chip.

In these past two months, he finally recorded all the Shadow and Dark Element spell models he purchased previously. He then completely obliterated the contents of the book.

This lightened his luggage tremendously.

After selling a huge portion of his potions and getting rid of those bulky spell books, Leylin could fit all of his belongings into one chest.

According to his projections, he could simply travel with a knapsack after selling the remaining potions.

“I have underestimated the popularity of potions. Right now, I have amassed over 2,000 Magic Crystals. If not for purchasing information and other miscellaneous items, I might have gotten over 2500 Magic Crystals!”

Leylin stretched his hands and felt around his robes. A sack of hard texture travelled to his hands. He could not help but smile.

“Fortunately, there are high-grade Magic Crystals in this Magus World. One piece can be exchanged for 100 ordinary Magic Crystals. Otherwise, I would have a problem carrying all those Magic Crystals.....”

“A.I. Chip, stat update!” Leylin ordered.

[Beep! Leylin Farlier, Level 2 Acolyte and Knight. Strength: 2.7, Agility: 2.8, Vitality: 3.0, Spiritual Force: 4.6, Magical Power: 4.0. Status: Healthy]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“En! Strength and Agility increased. This is the result of continuous stimulation of my internal Knight energy. After it

stabilises, I can begin to gradually take on the next phase of Knight's training. This should raise all my stats to at least 3! As for Spiritual Force, it only increased a little. This was the only return I got after a number of life and death situations. Magus training, as expected, is only going to get more and more difficult!"

Leylin sighed and mentally projected the map again.

On the huge map, Jersha Province was in the central region of Poolfield Kingdom. There were many small Magus families here.

Although this was the capital of a regular human kingdom, it attracted all sorts of travellers, many wandering Magi, and even criminal Magi.

These Magi, because of their radical opinions, or some other matter, were exiled from their previous association, faced with persecution, or even put up on bounty lists. They turned into wandering Magi, often making them very dangerous people.

"In Jersha Province, it just so happens that there is an extremely huge Magus market controlled by the Redbud Family, one of the three big families supporting Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. I will definitely be able to obtain the latest news here!"

In these past two months, Leylin had secretly made inquiries about the various news related to the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. However, the information he got were all rather vague. He only knew that it was at war with some factions to its west. As for its opponents, and how the academy was faring, everything

was extremely hazy.

“We’re here, Ellinel Market. I’ll sell my remaining potions and ask about news of the academy before resuming my journey.”

Leylin decided.

In a tiny village’s ruined wharf.

“If not for the intelligence report, I would never have believed that the first Magus market in the Poolfield Kingdom would actually be hidden underneath a regular human village”.

As Leylin scanned the village’s surroundings, a lifeless atmosphere greeted him.

“The Magus market should be below here since there are signs of occasional radiation emanating from it. The villagers above are also definitely sickly, where some might even die suddenly. How would they be able to flourish? I’m afraid after a dozen or so years, this village would become another ghost town!”

Leylin adjusted the grey robes on his body and covered his facial features, before coming to the entrance of a hut made of bricks.

The corroded door let out a dull noise as Leylin knocked lightly.

“Who are you?” An icy voice sounded from inside.

“I am a wandering acolyte, who wishes to have a look at the market!”

Creak! The large door opened and revealed a black robed figure.

Leylin was shocked; he felt murderous intent oozing from the black robed figure. This may be a very obscure concept but if one killed too many of their kind, they will definitely be different from others. The feeling that this black robed figure gave Leylin was that many experts of the same level died in his hands.

“As expected of a large market, even the guard is so fierce!” The black robed figure emitted the energy waves of a Level 3 Acolyte. He even carried a one-time use magical item. It could not escape the A.I. Chip’s detection though.

“No matter if it’s your first time or not, I will enumerate the rules. Any fights inside the market will be deemed as a provocation by the Redbud Family.” The black robed figure said icily.

Only then did Leylin notice the Redbud insignia on his sleeves.

“I understand!” Leylin nodded his head.

“Alright, the fee would be 1 Magic Crystal!”

After Leylin paid the entry fee, the black robed figure tapped lightly on the fireplace, and steel machinery rumbled. The fireplace swung to the right revealing a flight of stairs going downwards.

“Even the style is reminiscent of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” Leylin shook his head.

After entering the tunnel, the fireplace swung shut, and the passage dimmed once more with only a few lamps dimly glowing in the depths.

Leylin descended the stairs. After he felt he had gone a dozen metres underground, a huge cavern emerged.

The market was extremely huge. It was the size of several football fields. The ceiling was studded with some kind of stalactite that made Leylin wonder if they were natural.

In the middle of the market, buildings built using grey rocks were lined up in a row. Surrounding them was a circle of wooden huts. As for the street stalls, they were actually rather sparse.

Magi and acolytes wore robes of various colours; white, black, and grey-robed people could be seen stepping in and out of the shops.

Leylin began to understand the rules of the Magus World a little

better.

Normally, official Magi would either wear black or white, and acolytes would wear grey. White represented the factions that were more peace loving, for example, the healing arts and the like. As for the black robes, they leaned more towards combat, and their dispositions were rather strange too.

Of course, these are the conventionally attired ones. There were also some Magi who wore various odd looking costumes that were rather bizarre.

Chapter 51: Lowian's Teachings

“Sir, do you need someone to show you around? I only charge 1 Magic Crystal!” Clamored the little boys and girls who crowded around Leylin.

“No need for that!” Leylin immediately refused.

After visiting a lot of markets, he found out that these guides did not require that much payment. Some of the families controlling these markets even provide free guides to help patrons move around.

The first time he entered a market, he gave a little boy a Magic Crystal. This was a huge deficit for him.

As for ordinary markets, they were considerably smaller. Circling for a few times would be enough for anyone to become familiar with the place. There were even signs around. So under normal circumstances, patrons do not require guides at all.

Leylin casually strolled inside the market. Later, he walked towards the largest Potion's Shop.

“Greetings Sir!” A white-bearded geezer smiled and bowed.

“I wish to sell a batch of potions. Their prices may be a little high!” Leylin was extremely direct.

“Please follow me!” The old geezer was startled. He immediately brought Leylin to a small booth at the back.

After closing the door, Leylin felt the energy waves generated by an isolation spell formation.

“Our shop extends confidentiality towards our guests. Moreover, we also employ the best safety measures.....”The white-bearded geezer smiled as he explained.

“Not bad!” Leylin nodded his head, being able to avoid the crowd was extremely beneficial to him.

There were two sofas within the booth, and between these was a small wooden table with two hot piping drinks on it.

“Please have a seat!” The geezer gestured.

Leylin sat down and reclined on the sofa. He lifted the cup and sniffed lightly, “Powder of Tillan Beans with black pearls added, very beneficial for an acolyte’s meditation!”

“Your achievements in Potioneering have left me speechless!” The old geezer’s eyes widened in shock.

“Thank you. I have been inside an experiment lab for a year until now working on something important. Please appraise these potions for me!”

Leylin handed over a sack to the old geezer.

The old geezer opened the sack, and immediately cried out, “Eh?!”

In the sack was the remainder of Leylin’s potions, each and every one of them glowed resplendently.

“Please wait a minute!” The old geezer took out a monocle and placed it over his eye.

After what seemed like half an hour, the old geezer looked a little exhausted and rubbed his temples after he put the monocle away.

“37 hemostasis potions, 45 antidotes, silence potions.....These potions are all of good quality and have been preserved well. I can give you 900 Magic Crystals for them!”

“Very fair!” Leylin gently nodded his head.

The old geezer then stored the potions for safekeeping and counted out 9 high-grade Magic Crystals which he handed over to Leylin.

“Sir, you must be a Potioneering Master? Please keep this; you will be able to enjoy a 10% discount on items and services in our shop. We can also offer a higher price for other potions you may

have.....”

The old geezer said as he presented a purple card to Leylin with both hands.

Leylin glanced at the card and then pocketed it swiftly, “I’ll keep that in mind!”

The old geezer then sent Leylin off. As they bade farewell, Leylin casually asked, “As you know, I’ve just finished my experiments. Are there places where I may inquire about the latest news on the Poolfield Kingdom?”

The old geezer stared blankly for a while before answering, “If you wish to learn some secrets and the latest intelligence, Gandor’s Grocery Shop would be your best choice. Although his temper is a little wacky, but he’s the most informed.....”

According to the old geezer’s direction, Leylin came to Gandor’s Grocery Shop.

As he entered, the things inside the shop were very untidy, and various items were lying around. There were even many that the A.I. Chip could not identify.

One thing stood out though, no counterfeit products were inside. This piqued Leylin’s interest.

“Who?” A voice sounded from behind the counter. Following

which, a geezer, who appeared as if he was on the brink of death, popped out from behind it.

“The geezer from the Potion Shop recommended this place to me. I wish to gather the latest intelligence regarding the Poolfield Kingdom.

“Same old rules, only after buying an item in my shop will you will be able to obtain information from me.” The half-dead geezer lips did not move but a mysterious voice could be heard from him.

“Alright! I’ll simply pick anything I fancy!” Leylin wanted to pick an item at random.

“No can do, it is I who will choose for you!” The half-dead geezer sniggered.

“No wonder business is so bad here!” Leylin rolled his eyes, “Go ahead then!”

The half-dead geezer rummaged through a shelf at the back of the shop. The wooden shelf made a creaking sound. It looked like it would collapse any moment. Leylin was even worried about him since the shelf looked like it could collapse at any moment.

“I found it!” The half-dead geezer took a black coloured scroll from the shelf.

On this scroll were characters that Leylin did not recognize at all.

Its corners were extremely frayed and looked like mice had chewed on it.

“This is a fragment of The Great Magus Serholm’s spell. I’ll sell it to you for only 1,000 Magic Crystals, an absolutely worthy deal, what do you think?” The half-dead geezer eyes glittered.

“This could even be the inheritance of The Great Magus Serholm! Perhaps, you could advance to high-level Magus after you buy it.....”

Leylin was left speechless as he took it in his hands.

“A.I. Chip! Scan!”

[Beep! Confirmed: Carbon dating, document comparison analysis shows this page is composed of human skin! Belongs to: Lowian’s teachings: 89.5%, Blue Cobalt rare book: 56.5% and Serholm’s writing: 21.7%]

“There exists something like this? A.I. Chip, what is the strength of the geezer opposite me?”

[Estimated Level 3 Acolyte, based on energy wave emissions, Confirmed: he is in a process of reconstructing his physical body. Degree of similarity: Zombification: 86.6% and Aggrieved Soul Transformation: 45.6%]

Leylin pretended to scrutinize the page for some more time before looking up at the geezer, “This seems like a remnant of the Lowian’s teachings. You actually lied to me?”

“How can this be?” The half-dead geezer hurriedly lamented. A flash of shock crossed his eyes, which immediately changed into a cajoling expression.

“Even if it is the Lowian’s teachings, this assuredly belongs to Sir Rookmanst, a Rank 2 Magus, 2 years ago, this same fragment was sold for 700 Magic Crystals. So, how about I sell it to you for that price?”

Leylin shook his head, “ Lowian’s teachings were written in an advanced-coded language. Only an official Magus will be able to decipher the code. Ordinary acolytes will definitely not be able to.”

“Furthermore, although the contents were written in code, but their page numbers were written in the Angema language to make it more obscure!” Leylin pointed to the page number at the bottom.

“Look at this, it’s only page number 12! According to <Life of Rookmanst>, the first 30 pages of Lowian’s teachings contained only records of his experiments, and insights penned when he was still an acolyte. Only when he turned into an official Magus, did he chance upon an inheritance and he began to display a terrifying talent! As for this overpriced page, the page number should at least be beyond 100 to be believable!”

“Transactions among Magi are based on the premise that the exchanged goods are equal in value. This derelict page of yours is not worth 700 Magic Crystals. According to my estimate, 70 is its highest asking price.” Leylin concluded.

“Yikes.....Hahaha! Today’s weather isn’t bad!” The half-dead man tried putting up a front, but finally gave in to Leylin’s unwavering gaze.

“Alright, I never expected to meet a very erudite scholar! Take your pick then!”

“No need, I came here to gather intelligence! I’ll just buy it at a fair price.” Leylin held onto the black coloured page and placed 7 middle-grade Magic Crystals on the table.

Although the coding on this derelict page could only be deciphered by an official Magus, Leylin wished to give the A.I. Chip a shot at breaking the code. After all in terms of processing ability, Leylin was confident that the A.I. Chip’s ability was much better than even an official Magus’, despite this being his first attempt at such.

“Alright! Alright! What do you want to ask?” The half-dead geezer sprawled on the table and ate the Magic Crystals one by one. Leylin was rather shocked by this scene.

“I require a lot of energy. If you were to give me another 1,000 Magic Crystals I would’ve definitely completed my physical body’s

restructuring.....” The half-dead geezer’s expression was resentful.

Leylin shook his head, “Tell me news about Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!”

“Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! You are an acolyte there?”

“Only some interest in the happenings over there. Besides, I don’t want to suffer any collateral damage from the war!”

“Alright!” The half-dead geezer did not ask anymore. “I graduated from there too. Now Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s situation isn’t that great. I heard that Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle teamed up against Abyssal Bone Forest Academy in this war.....”

The half-dead geezer spoke endlessly.

Half a day later, Leylin walked out from the grocery shop with an extremely miserable face. “I never thought that the situation would already be this bad. It seems like I need to stay out here longer than I expected.”

According to the half-dead geezer, the reason for the war had long since been forgotten. What mattered was that Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle were factions on the same level as Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Their alliance placed Abyssal Bone Forest Academy in a disadvantageous position. Right now, the academy could only rely on its defence spell formation to resist.

“A.I. Chip, how long will it take to decode this page?”

Leylin felt the derelict page of the Lowian’s teachings. Although it was made from human skin, Leylin still wrapped it well and kept it within his robes.

[Beep! Analysis in progress! No comparable code found in the databank. Will require conjecture.....Estimated time to completion: 93 days 13 hours!]

“3 odd months? I can do that!” Leylin stroked his chin as he casually strolled around the market.

What he had told the half-dead geezer earlier was the truth, but Leylin simply wanted to gamble upon the A.I. Chip’s abilities. Even if it did not work out, the information the half-dead geezer had provided was worth at least 20 to 30 Magic Crystals.

Although the page number of the Lowian’s teachings’ derelict journal page was pretty low and contained mostly information for acolytes, for a Level 2 Acolyte like Leylin, it still was pretty useful.

There may even be some of Rookmanst’s meditation techniques, experiment records or even some discovery of resources. If he could discover them, Leylin would benefit immensely.

In any case, the processing capabilities of the A.I. Chip were very impressive. Leylin had not even used half of its capabilities, just letting it sit idle for most of the time. He might as well use this downtime for deciphering the code.

Chapter 52: Slaves

Leylin's footsteps did not stop until he walked out of Ellinel Market.

The exit was at the side of the village and was actually beneath a stack of hay. It was also guarded by a black-robed man with the Redbud insignia.

"A.I. Chip! Initiate area scan!" After walking out of the village, Leylin ordered after walking out of the village.

A faint light blue screen was projected in front of Leylin's eyes, clearly identifying a sneaky figure tailing him from behind. In the whole light blue projection, the red dot was extremely obvious.

[Target's identified. Strength estimated at Level 2 Acolyte. No Magic Artifact detected!]

The A.I. Chip's voice intoned.

"Only a Level 2 Acolyte huh? Seems like it's not any huge faction, but only an avaricious dog after some wealth!"

Leylin's eyes flashed coldly, "If I didn't have other plans"

The Level 2 Acolyte tailing Leylin seemed to be extremely patient. Only after Leylin was a dozen miles away from the vicinity of the market did he make his sneak attack!

Whoosh! Suddenly two balls of mud rose beneath Leylin's feet, turning into two yellow-brown coloured hands that tightly held down Leylin's ankles.

A dagger suffused with purple light immediately stabbed towards Leylin's back.

"Success!" yelled the sneak attacking acolyte whose face was flushed with joy. He belatedly realised that Leylin had mysteriously dissolved, turning into a vine with thorns that coiled around his body.

The thorns mercilessly dug into flesh. The acolyte could even feel the vine come alive and was greedily feeding on his blood.

"Damn! It's a golem! What is this spell! Shadow Embodiment? Leeching Vines?" As the acolyte lost huge amounts of blood, he increasingly became muddleheaded.

"Ah! You can't do this! Please.....Please spare me....."

The acolyte pleaded. Alas, the immediately the vines squirmed and sealed his mouth.

Bang! The spell's effect disappeared, and on the ground was left

the shrivelled corpse of the acolyte.

Against his enemies, Leylin was never merciful.

The second day, Leylin once again visited the market.

“Sir! Do you need a guide? I only require 1 Magic Crystal!” The noisy little kids were still clamouring at the entrance.

Today Leylin had changed his clothes. And to conceal himself even further, he changed his appearance too.

Although his previous face was a fake, there was no guaranteed special spell effect that could penetrate and see through the cloak.

As for energy waves and the sort, Leylin was not too worried about it. Yesterday he deliberately avoided official Magi, so his energy waves would never be recorded.

To capture the energy waves generated by Spiritual Force, an official Magus has to make enough preparations beforehand. There wouldn't be any Magi who had nothing better to do.

“You'll do!” Leylin randomly picked a little girl.

“Thank you! Sir, I am extremely familiar with this place!” The

little girl was a little overjoyed. She wore a white coloured dress and looked to be somewhat thin.

After tossing a Magic Crystal to the girl, Leylin said slowly, “I wish to enter a higher leveled area!”

His voice was modified to sound different from the day before.

“A higher leveled area? You mean.....The second level?” The little girl asked a little hesitantly.

“Of course!” This was the point to the experience Leylin patiently amassed after coming to the market many times. These markets weren’t very huge, and Leylin always felt that something was missing. Certain precious resources were absent in these markets too. These little children guides most likely stood here waiting for powerful customers to bring them to the more concealed areas.

“Since you know about the second level, then you should also understand that if you don’t have an item worth over 1000 Magic Crystals or a guarantor, you will be denied entry.”

“Naturally I do! Lead the way!” The little girl raised her head, yet she was unable to discern the expression behind Leylin’s cloak. She could only lower her head and lead the way.

“Although there should be many official Magi on the second level, there is no choice. The two ancient formulas, Azure Potion and Tears of Mary, plus many of their ingredients have not been

collected yet. If I can't even find it here, biggest Magus market, then there is completely no chance anymore. I can only look for substitute ingredients!"

Leylin's expression was rather dark. As he journeyed, he sold potions along the way and did his utmost to collect all of the ingredients of the two ancient potions. However, he was met with little success so far. Ellinel Market was the second largest gathering of Magi after Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. If he couldn't find what he needed here, then Leylin was completely helpless.

Leylin followed the little girl. They arrived at a rather deserted alley.

She used a stone found on a wall corner of the wall to knock.

Bang! The alley's walls shifted, revealing an underground passage.

"Here it is!" The little girl said softly, as if very afraid.

"Lead the way!" Leylin followed the little girl and they continued walking downwards. Several minutes later, they reached a door at the end of the passage.

Two Level 3 Acolytes wearing blood red robes were standing guard. According to the A.I. Chip's scan, they carried Magic Artifacts on their bodies. This slightly startled Leylin. At the same time, he was filled with curiosity towards the market behind it.

The little girl went forward and exchanged a few words with the two acolytes before walking back to Leylin. She curtsied, “Most respected Sir, I can only lead you this far!”

When she finished speaking, she hurriedly ran back up the flight of stairs disappearing into the darkness.

“It seems like there is something in this premium market that terrifies her!” Leylin thought indifferently as he walked towards the two acolytes.

“An item of proof, or an item worth at least 1000 Magic Crystals!” A red robed acolyte said icily. Standing before them, Leylin could somehow sense the wails of aggrieved souls hovering around them.

“What terrifying people!” Leylin thought inwardly. He tossed over a small sack containing 10 high-grade Magic Crystals.

The red robed acolyte opened and looked before tossing the sack back to Leylin. He then opened the door behind him.

Leylin walked in unhurriedly. Only after the large door closed behind him, was he inclined to observe the area in front of him.

This field was most likely beneath the market earlier. Its surface area was smaller, only having a street traversing it.

From time to time Magi walked past. Since it was not very crowded, the distance between passersby was rather far. There were almost no Level 1 Acolytes here. Level 2 Acolytes too were very few. Most of the people here were Level 3 Acolytes. Their bodies all radiated strong energy waves. Official Magi too were rather common.

Leylin inhaled deeply and walked down the street.....

Half an hour later, Leylin walked out of a stone hut with a Potion sign, his face had obvious signs of joy.

They had the main ingredients Kroft mentioned, as well as the rest of the ingredients, “It is indeed the largest market!”

The main ingredients of the two ancient potions, Azure Potion and Tears of Mary, were the most important. As for other ingredients, they were easier to acquire. Being able to buy them all at once exceeded Leylin’s expectations.

Leylin spent more than half of the 1000 Magic Crystals he prepared to purchase these ingredients. He was still satisfied, though, and felt that the expense was worth it.

Putting away the ingredients, he anticipated that he had to find a safe place and begin brewing the potions. His mood was rather good. He even felt inclined to stroll around a bit.

The goods here were obviously of a higher grade than the market above. Leylin even saw a low-grade Magic Artifact dagger for sale.

However, the price was at least 400 Magic Crystals, which immediately made Leylin stop feeling lucky.

Suddenly, Leylin heard noisy clamouring voices travelled over leaving Leylin a little startled. He tracked these voices and made a new discovery.

“Slave market?”

What Leylin saw in front of him was a large fenced area. Many stark naked slaves were standing behind fences. Their faces showed either numb indifference or extreme humiliation as they let the acolytes and Magi take their pick.

“Just right! I’ll need a few slaves myself!”

Leylin wanted to stay in Extreme Night Town for around 3 years. He could not manage many things by himself. Originally, he planned to recruit a few guards and servants when he got there, but a few high-grade slaves were now conveniently available.

After all, they were all raised or controlled by Magi. This lent their owner better security and assured functionality.

“Sir! What do you think? Do you need a female slave for your bed?” Look, these are all good quality ones, some are even of the

nobility.

A slave trader looked as Leylin walked forward. The slaver hurriedly patted the ample breasts of a group of female slaves behind him, which carried a rippling wave effect.

Behind him were a dozen utterly naked noblewomen. Their skin was extremely smooth, and their figures were quite vivacious. Even if they were slaves, their aura of nobility could not be stifled.

“How did they end up here? I mean, as nobles, wouldn’t it be troublesome?” Leylin was a little curious.

“Please don’t worry, these are all nobles who fought and lost in battles. Their fiefdoms have long since been usurped and their families destroyed. They are legally under the death sentence. There will absolutely be no trouble at all.

The trader smugly explained.

Leylin looked behind a noblewoman who was being dragged away. There was obviously a noble young lady standing there. He could not help but think of the young noble lady he met previously in the woods. If her revenge failed, who knows if she’ll be sold at this place too.

“How are they? Buy a couple, and it’s up to you how you play them! After you’re sick of them, you can use them for your experiments. Even if they die, it’s not a problem!” The trader did

his utmost to entice him.

Leylin shook his head, “I wish to purchase a few guards, preferably of Knight level. Also, I will need a few assistants for my experiments!”

“If it’s like this!” The trader stroked his chin, “What you’re looking for are premium slaves, and their price will be extraordinary! Of course, those who are able to enter here are customers with strength. Please follow me!”

Leylin walked behind the trader and saw many slaves. Some of them were well-built youths while some were still children. They were all staring outside from behind the fence looking fearful. From time to time a few Magi pointed at them or even walked forward to inspect them.

Leylin even saw a group of Magi surrounding a few Beastmen and Marine Species slaves, bidding over them.

The trader pulled Leylin to a large tent, and called a fatty over, “This is my friend, Dylan. Right, he has some premium goods.”

Leylin did not know what Dylan whispered to the trader, but after a while, the trader laughed heartily as he walked away. Only then Dylan smile towards Leylin and said, “Most respected guest, I have already understood your requirements! We just received a new batch of premium slaves, please follow me!”

Chapter 53: Subordinates

Leylin followed Dylan into a large white-coloured tent.

A smell of incense inside permeated the air. It masked the musky unwashed odor of the slaves and various bodily excrement. Despite this, the atmosphere was much better than outside.

The slaves in here wore some thin clothes that could somewhat cover their private areas.

Dylan brought Leylin to a few extremely muscled guys, “They were all raised and taught by a Knight! How do they look? I dare say these definitely meet your requirement!”

Leylin nodded his head and walked towards a large bald guy, “A.I. Chip! Stat Scan!”

[Beep! Target's Strength: 3.1, Agility: 2.8, Vitality: 2.9, Spiritual Force: 1.5. Status: Dowsed in neurotoxin!]

The other Knight Level slaves' stats were more or the less similar. Leylin observed that their pupils were widened and somewhat dispirited.

“The mind of these Knights seem to have been affected by something.....”

Dylan hurriedly smiled apologetically, “Knights’ resistances are always higher than normal, to meet the various needs of our customers, we are unable to use standard marking to control their consciousness! They have all undergone constant brainwashing and corporeal subjugation. Furthermore, they were controlled by drugs, turning them into high-level servants. Although they might not be as bright as regular Knights, they are still able to understand some simple commands.

Branding of the consciousness was what official Magi used to control their servants. However, it was somewhat ineffective if acolytes were to use it.

Dylan obviously noticed Leylin’s strength before offering this batch of goods to him.

“It’s not bad, what’s the price?” Leylin asked.

“100 Magic Crystals each!” Dylan replied.

Leylin nodded his head and picked out two with the best stats. After paying the Magic Crystals, he received a scorpion-like organism from Dylan.

“The sting of this Desert Scorpion contains a unique poison. These poisonous secretions from this scorpion were used on your two slaves. If they do not take the antidote produced by the scorpion in 10 days time, they will die horribly! Of course, this is should be used as a last resort to control them. After all, during

their training, they have already been brainwashed to obey their Master's commands! Now, the lives of these two Knights are yours!"

Dylan respectfully handed the box containing the scorpion's sting.

Leylin nodded his head and kept the box. "Also, I require a serving maid, one who can take on the role of assistant during experiments....."

As Leylin walked out of the market, two Knights wearing armour and a delicate yet pretty maid followed behind him.

The maid's eyes were limpid and she wore a black cotton dress. According to Dylan, this maid received extensive training since she was young. She was more than capable to take on the role of an assistant for simple experiments. She met Leylin's requirements rather well. Moreover, she had taken the Mandara Flower's essence, which could counteract the radiation from a Magus. This kept her looking youthful.

The cost was her life span, which was shortened to only 30 years.

"Ellinel Market did pretty well in designing this level. We can actually choose our exits freely. However, this is a service only premium customers may enjoy!"

When Leylin and his servants appeared, they were no longer at

the small village. They were at the outer walls of a city.

This was a premium service provided by the Ellinel Market, but there was also a fee for it.

If this helped him avoid more trouble, it was worth it for Leylin who was not very strong right now.

“Master!” The Knights and the maid knelt and saluted him.

“En!” Leylin nodded his head indifferently, “Do you have names?”

The two Knights looked at each other, and their eyes dimmed eventually, “No, please grant us one, Master!” The maid too shook her head and indeed seemed rather pitiful.

“You will be called Greem! He pointed to the larger Knight. “You will be called Fraser!” This was another Knight.

“As for you!” Leylin looked at the beautiful maid, “Anna will do!”

“Thank you for granting us names Master, we will loyally engrave it in our hearts!” The three subordinates knelt on the ground and kissed Leylin’s shoe.

“Alright.” Leylin waved his hands and got them to stand. He then looked at his surroundings.

It seemed to be a small forest, and there was even the silhouette of a large city ahead. It was, at least, ten times bigger than the city he was in earlier. The entrance had carriages and carts going in and out. It seemed to be flourishing.

“Greem! Go buy a horse carriage in the city, I’ll wait for you here!” Leylin tossed a black purse to the larger Knight.

“Also, buy some goods for our journey, as well as some clothes!” Leylin instructed him.

Even since he destroyed his chest of spell books and sold all his potions, His remaining possessions amounted to over 3000 Magic Crystals all in all. His luggage too was reduced by more than half. He could fit all of them in a knapsack. As for the camping items he used previously, he already destroyed them before going to the market to save himself the trouble of going back.

“Yes, Sir!” Greem took the money purse and bowed slightly as he was about to leave.

“Also, don’t call me Sir from now on, Young Master will do!” Leylin touched his youthful face and was somewhat stumped.

“We obey!” The three of them knelt on the ground.

Seeing the figure of Greem leaving, Leylin suddenly turned and asked Fraser, “Do you have any inkling of the time before you

became a slave?”

Fraser had brown hair and blue eyes, and his body was littered with scars. Moreover, his age could not be determined, but he seemed to have had an abundance of experiences and suffering.

“I can’t remember anymore! Every time I try, I feel a splitting pain in my head.” Fraser touched his forehead as if trying to recall something. His visage crumpled with pain.

“So it’s like this!” Leylin surmised that it could be the influence of some drug or spell that was only effective on normal humans. Right now he could probably break it if he spent some time on it, but he absolutely had no intention of doing so.

After all, his objective was to acquire subordinates, not to seek trouble. Those who were captured as slaves were the losers of battles and wars. If they were to recover their memories and seek Leylin’s help, what should he do then? Even if they don’t, who knows if they will continue remaining loyal to him.

“How about you?” Leylin looked at the shy Anna.

Anna’s skin was extremely white and gave off a milky glow. It made Leylin impulsively want to touch her. Her face too was extremely exquisite like a doll’s.

“Anna has been raised by a merchant since childhood, and was eventually sold to Sir Dylan.....”

“For a maid like her, it was naturally more convenient to groom her at a very young age. Moreover, she had to learn various knowledge, and grooming of etiquette. Only then would she deserve the fondness of those higher ups. Of course, she had to take some lessons in pleasing men. Anna looked at Leylin who was still shrouded in the cloak, unable to discern his countenance. However, based on the voice alone, deduced that it should belong to a younger person. She could not help but blush.

What lessons have you taken before? How much do you know about the Magi?”

“I have learnt <The Science of All Living Things> and <Herbs Identification>, but.....but only some preparations of simple ingredients. Anna is not an acolyte. For experiments that require the use of energy particles, I am powerless in that area.....My apologies, Young Master!” Anna’s fingers clenched her dress and seemed discomfited.

“That’s not bad at all.” Leylin was actually satisfied.

He had many secrets. Letting an outsider join his experiments was inappropriate. Helping him with basic preparations was already good enough.

If he wanted a Magus assistant, he or she must be at least acolyte level. This level of a slave is extremely expensive and was always riddled with problems too.

Although he did not see any in the slave market, Leylin knew that some other place in the market, there would be another slave market that specialised in selling acolytes as slaves.

After all, for many Dark Magi, it was only acolytes who could resist radiation, were to best subjects for their experiments.

As to sources of such acolyte slaves, they made use of war criminals or prisoners.

If Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was completely defeated, and the headquarters seized, then the fate of all the acolytes in the academy-apart from the ones backed by strong factions-will most likely end up as slaves.

As for people like Leylin who escaped earlier, he could only draw a clear line between himself and the academy in future. And take the four seas as his home, becoming a pitiable wanderer.

“Right now, I can only pray that the academy wins..... Even if they lose, I hope they don’t lose badly.....” Leylin looked towards the West, his expression a little grim.

Seeing Young Master become pensive, Anna and Fraser bowed their heads too, not daring to utter a word.

With the noise of rolling wheels gradually getting closer, Leylin could see a Knight driving a horse carriage, the appearance seemed to be Greem.

The horse carriage was pitch black in colour and did not have much in the way of patterns on it. The merchants who sold the carriage did not know if Greem belonged to the nobility, so they did not dare inscribe on the carriage. However, it looked extremely sturdy. A couple of large black horses were pulling it, dashing rapidly towards Leylin.

“Young Master!” Greem got down the carriage, and handed the money purse back to Leylin with both hands, “The carriage cost.....”

“No need for further discussion.” Leylin took it over, and then threw the money purse to Anna, “In the future you will deal with the finances, if there is not enough then ask me!”

“Yes, Young Master!’ Anna carefully kept the money purse.

In it were only a few gold coins used by normal humans. Leylin only required a little effort to get as much as he wanted. What he was concerned about were the Magic Crystals, the currency used in the Magus World.

It was a pity that even in the South Coastal Regions, Magic Crystals were in extremely high demand as currency. After visiting so many markets, Leylin could see shops exchange coins for Magic Crystals, but never the other way round.

These were his subordinates in the future. After thinking for a while, Leylin undid his hood. and revealed a dashing face. His

appearance, however, was still in its slightly altered state.

“You will be my trusted aides in the future, so take a look at my true appearance!”

The reason why Leylin disguised himself was to buy and sell resources. Right now since all his potions were sold, he did not need a disguise. These people also had to meet Leylin daily, so they will definitely see his true appearance—so the sooner the better.

After Leylin removed the spell, the muscles of his face twitched, and returned back to his original youthful visage.

Seeing Anna and the rest nod their heads, Leylin commanded, “Let’s set off towards Eastwoods Province!”

Chapter 54: Roran City

On the wide road, a horse carriage rapidly sped by. In the driver's seat sat two large guys wearing metallic armour and long swords. One look and people got the message that they were not to be messed with. Farmers in the vicinity scurried out of their way.

Inside the carriage, the smell of wood and lacquer mixed together and was somewhat unpleasant.

Leylin's nose wrinkled as he caught a whiff of perfume. Seeing that Anna was blushing beside him, Leylin smiled and beckoned, "Come here!"

When she drew near, Leylin made her recline halfway, then lay his head on her chest.

His hands conveniently roved around Anna's thighs. The thin cotton fabric could not hide her beauty. Leylin felt as if both his hands were touching a piece of warm and soft jade.

Savouring the softness he was leaning on, and hearing Anna's panting, made Leylin feel extremely content. He sighed, closed both his eyes and stayed still.

He had had been feeling on edge lately, as he had to exercise prudence after every trade. This occupied a lot of Leylin's thoughts. Now that he did not have to do so anymore, Leylin could finally take a break, and obtain ample time to rest. He even had two Knights to take care of the trouble.

Naturally, the two Knights would be sleeping outside, leaving the interior of the carriage to their Master and the maid. Leylin was no gentleman. Moreover, Anna was also quite a beauty and excelled in that area. Idling away in the carriage, he naturally had already bedded her. There was even a faint trace of dark red blood on the cabin's floor.

As a maid bought by Leylin, how could Anna resist her Master? All along the journey, she served him wholeheartedly and tried various positions with him, which also satisfied a few of his fetishes.

“Thankfully I am a magician. I can use magical herbs and undergo meditation to continuously recover and increase my Vitality. With the previous Leylin's sad physique, I would most likely have aged prematurely.....”

Leylin ordered mentally, “A.I. Chip, show me my stats!”

[Leylin Farlier, Level 2 Acolyte. Strength: 2.7, Agility: 2.8, Vitality: 3.0, Spiritual Force: 4.6, Magical Power: 4.0. Status: Healthy]

“Four to five months have passed, and I persisted in meditation everyday. To think that there was only an increase of 0.2.....” Leylin's expression was a little unsightly, “I have to hurry to my destination and settle down to try brewing the ancient potions. Who knows when I will meet the requirements for advancing?”

All acolytes encounter a bottleneck when advancing to Level 3. Even a fifth-grade acolyte like Jayden still requires years of training in order to breakthrough.

After analysing the conditions needed to advance, mastering the spells and brewing Reactive Elixirs became trivial. Only getting past the 7 Spiritual Force bottleneck remained baffling for countless genius acolytes. Even official Magi did not have good solutions to address this aspect of Spiritual Force cultivation. Only constant painstaking meditation had any effectiveness or maybe the use potions and the sort could be an alternative. The cost of these, unfortunately, could not be borne by the typical acolyte.

Right now Leylin too was stuck on the same Spiritual Force bottleneck.

“A.I. Chip! How is the analysis of the two potions? And what is the progress in deciphering Lowian’s Teachings?”

[Beep! Azure Potion analysis progress: 100%, Tears of Mary analysis progress: 78%, Lowian’s Teachings analysis progress: 63.7%]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“The Azure Potion has been fully analysed long ago. Unfortunately, the main ingredients are now completely extinct.

Finding substitutes requires countless experiments. As for the Tears of Mary, it has been at 78% for 3 months now with no signs of progress at all. Could some crucial procedures be missing?

Leylin's brows furrowed; the A.I. Chip's processing ability was extremely powerful. The progress in analysing the ancient potion Tears of Mary analysis stagnated at 78%, which made Leylin rather surprised.

“These formulas that Professor Kroft gave me should be correct. If the A.I. Chip could not analyse them after all this time, it might have met with some difficult question that was beyond the parameters of the databank.....Tears of Mary! Tears!” Leylin guessed.

“Could it be.....That this ancient potion formula has something to do with a soul?”

After all hearing the name of this potion, one will easily associate it with some ill-fated event.

As for Lowian's Teachings, the progress was rather good. Although the creator used extremely complicated coding to ensure secrecy, the A.I. Chip was least daunted by the complicated computations.

Leylin roughly knew the general contents of this scroll through reading the previous portions that have been analysed.

“Unfortunately, though this item is not bad, I can only make use of it when I become a Level 3 Acolyte!”

Leylin shook his head and got rid of these distracting thoughts.

Suddenly, the horse carriage stopped.

Leylin’s brows furrowed as he asked, “Did something happen?”

“Young Master please be at ease, it is merely a group of bandits who have blocked the path!” Fraser has already gone over to take care of it!” Greem’s voice travelled through the wooden wall.

Ping Pang! Bang!

As expected, moments later it seemed that negotiations failed. The sound of various weapons clashing could be heard. After a few profanities and continuous wailing, Fraser’s voice was heard saying “It’s settled.” The horse carriage once again resumed the journey.

This kind of an outcome made Leylin feel very satisfied.

The reason why he bought two Knights and a maid was so that all the trifling matters would be handled by them, allowing him more time to focus on researching spells and doing more experiments.

These matters along the way were trivial. Leylin had the faint

outline of a plan that would require the participation of many people to accomplish. And these 3 people were at the core of it.

“Young.....Young Master!” Anna who was behind him, let off a low pant.

Only then did Leylin realise that his hand slipped. While he was deep in thought, his hand had unknowingly touched Anna’s private part.

Leylin smiled and withdrew his hand.

Seeing that Anna’s face was still flushed, he said, “Right now Young Master is occupied with something! I’ll have time tonight to play with you.....”

These intimate words made Anna somewhat shy as she lowered her head.

Pretending not to see the temptation right in front of him, he said “A.I. Chip! Transmit the fully analysed Azure Potion formula!”

Leylin always drew a clear line between entertainment and research. At the most crucial moment, he would definitely not be infatuated and lose the will to improve.

Seeing Leylin had already closed both his eyes, Anna's eyes dulled. She then rearranged her clothes back to its former neatness and tried her best to adjust her body so that Leylin could rest more comfortably.....”

Night fell after what felt like a moment.

Leylin regained consciousness after meditation.

“Young Master! There is a city not far from here!” Greem's voice travelled over.

“Where are we now?”

“According to the markings on the map, we should have already entered Eastwoods Province. This is Roran City, which is situated at the provincial borders!”

The crashing sounds of things being rummaged sounded, as Fraser spoke.

“Roran City huh?” Leylin muttered to himself and adjusted the map stored in the A.I. Chip.

On the faint blue map, a red coloured line was linked with many cities. Roran City was towards the west of Extreme Night City, only several days' journey.

“After half a year of travelling, we are finally arriving huh?” Leylin felt a little rueful.

The reason why he chose this place earlier was its distance from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy—he wouldn’t be affected by the conflicts taking place over there. Another consideration was that only by being far away from the academy, would he be able to conduct a few prohibited experiments.

After all, he had the A.I. Chip in his body and also the process for many of the experiments were very unusual. If he had experimented at the academy, using the remnants or rubbish, the possibility of being discovered was inevitable.

However, Leylin felt less restrained ever since he had left—like a caged canary that was set free and soared into the sky.

Leylin opened the carriage door, and a gust of cold wind blew in.

“The feeling of freedom!” Leylin looked at the city, which seemed a little desolate, and the nearby farmers. He could not help but smile.

“First find us a place to lodge in. We’ll set off tomorrow morning!”

Leylin gave the orders. In the wild, it was natural to either stay in the horse carriage or inside a tent. However, since they had reached human habitation, Leylin naturally did not want to

deprive himself of this chance.

The black-coloured horse carriage entered the city under the respectful gaze of the guard.

To the people in Eastwoods Province, having a horse carriage, guards and a maid, elevated Leylin to the level of idle nobility.

In fact, Leylin was indeed a descendant of nobility. It was just that it was not this continent's nobility.

Leylin never considered using the dukedom title from Chernobyl Islands here. However, the status of a noble could indeed greatly reduce problems.

After finding a place at a local inn for lodging, Leylin called an attendant over.

“Do you know where I can hire people here?” Leylin played with a gold coin in his hands.

Seeing Anna behind Leylin, and staring intently at the gold coin in Leylin's hands, the attendant could not help but to gulp down a mouthful of saliva.

“Most respected Sire! If you require attendants, the employment marketplace beside the City Lord's Manor would be your best choice. There, you can hire strong warriors, proficient housekeepers, and even various maids and stable hands.....”

“Very good! Bring me there tomorrow and this gold coin will be yours!” Leylin smiled.

This time, he could stay in Extreme Night City for a long period. Leylin naturally wanted peace and quiet. He required people who could carry out his bidding. Since he did not want to be controlled by others, he would not be able to avoid wielding his own influence.

With Anna and the two knights as his core retainers, and hiring a few more from Roran City, his retinue would be more or less complete.

Although he could hire more people in Extreme Night City, they will definitely be infiltrated. As for Roran City, although it could not be avoided, it was good to reduce the numbers and influences to a minimum.

Dinner was white bread with vegetable soup. Although the shop owner had already taken out the best items to serve Leylin, it was still somewhat lacking compared to the academy’s cafeteria.

As Leylin was eating, many customers in the shop hid in the corner. They wore grey or brown coarse robes. Their gazes carried respect and fear.

Looking at the empty space around him, Leylin smiled bitterly.

Chapter 55: Roran Hawks

The next morning, Leylin was guided to the employment marketplace in Roran City by the attendant.

The employment marketplace was beside the City Lord's Manor, so the public security there was not bad. At the very least Leylin did not see any brawls taking place.

Along the way, there were many people who looked at Leylin and his group. They were especially interested in Anna, who was behind Leylin, as she was an exceptional beauty, and was even more so after some dressing up. Fortunately, they did not dare try anything funny for they were rather fearful of Greem who was covered in steel armour.

“Sir! This is the employment marketplace in Roran City. All the people you require can be found here, besides you can also issue any mission related hiring.....” The attendant explained to Leylin's group of three.

As for Fraser, Leylin made him stay at the inn to look after the horse carriage and luggage.

Although the important possessions such as potion ingredients and Magic Crystals were on Leylin, if they were to lose a few items like gold coins and the sort, it would prove rather troublesome.

Leylin surveyed the employment marketplace before him.

In his view was a large field, with groups of stable hands, mercenaries and the sort squatting on the ground, waiting for some employer to hire them.

Leylin knew that there had to be a slave market too, however it could not be displayed blatantly out in the open. After all, even a Magus market had to organise one covertly.

However this was well within Leylin's plans, he only wanted an entourage to hire here, so his requirements were lower.

"Young Sir, may I help you with anything?" As Leylin entered the marketplace, a group of traders and merchants swarmed around him. They were obviously dazzled by Leylin's lavish attire and shouted themselves hoarse as they tried to promote their products.

"I need a group of mercenaries to escort me to Extreme Night City, and also to guard my estate there. The contract duration would be at least two years!" Looking at the fervent traders, Leylin stated his requirements.

After reaching this part of the continent, Leylin realised that the novels, in his previous world talking about mercenary groups and bandit gangs and the like, were all nonsense.

Apart from a few large cities that Leylin was yet to visit, in Roran City and other smaller city marketplaces, there were no such groups to speak of.

All such employment, assassinations or similar missions, were arranged at the local bars or trade offices, some locations were even extremely bizarre.

“After all, the costs have to be factored in, and, if the remuneration does not even cover the cost of operations, there wouldn’t be any fool who would be willing to toss their gold coins into the water!”

“Then could I inquire if you have any requirements regarding the number of escorts and their strength?” A skinny man with a shiny bald head squeezed through the traders, and asked loudly.

“Number of people huh? Around 10 to 15! Their strength only needs to be equivalent to the average guard’s standard. The only request I have is loyalty and honour! As the mission might extend over 2 years, I will have to issue a contract, and the salary is to be given monthly!”

Leylin said blandly.

“In that case, I have a group of mercenaries here that fits your requirements!” The bald trader smiled.

“The Roran Hawks Mercenary Group has just finished their vacation. Moreover, they are citizens of Roran City, so their reputation can definitely be assured of!” The bald trader explained.

Leylin noticed that when the baldy mentioned the Roran Hawks Mercenary Group, the crowd all turned silent. There were even respected and envious looks. It seemed like the Roran Hawks had a large reputation around here.

“Alright then! Bring me to have a look at them, the commission will definitely be given to you later!” Leylin said.

“Please follow me!” The bald trader led the way, bringing Leylin out of the marketplace.

After the attendant in the inn received his gold coin, he bade his farewell. Anna and Greem followed closely behind Leylin; the current group of four walked on for about half an hour before reaching the southern part of the city.

Having reached here, the surrounding buildings were constructed differently. If the central part of the city was modelled after the City Lord’s Manor, with the buildings being extremely imposing and respectful, then the southern part of the buildings were multi-coloured with various styles. Very much like residential estates.

“This seems to be the area where the free citizens of the city gather!” Leylin muttered as he looked at the crushed rock laid into a pavement, and the small flower terrace and stone-made lamp.

“You have a good eyesight, Sir. Those who live here are predominantly the traders and free citizens of Roran City. The Roran Hawks Mercenary Group also reside here!”

“Are you not going to bring us to the training grounds of this mercenary group?” Green asked at the side.

“Respected Sir! Roran Hawks Mercenary Group is only a small unit, and their number does not exceed 30. Their reputation is only spread within Roran City. It is only a casual alliance formed by their leader. The cost of renting some space for them to train would have made their mission earnings obsolete. Thus, who would be willing to do that?” The baldy said with a wry smile

“Normally, the members are each busy with their own matters. They gather only when they receive a mission!” Saying which, the baldy looked at Leylin, and smiled apologetically, “Although the Roran Hawks Mercenaries are few in number, most of them are retired veterans. Moreover, their leader was once a middle ranked troop leader in the army, and his strength is not bad.....”

Obviously, the baldy was worried about Leylin being prejudiced against the mercenary group, but these matters could not be concealed either, so he could only say before they found out.

“A middle-ranked troop leader huh? I am looking forward to meeting him!” Leylin smiled, he actually did not really mind who he hired in Roran City, as their roles will primarily be to run errands for him in future.

“We’ve arrived!” The baldy brought Leylin and the rest in front of a two-storeyed villa. Within a circle surrounded by a rosewood fence, there was a small pond and garden. There was a type of

small white flower, their petals being extremely small, but with a dense aroma, a middle-aged lady was currently watering the flowers.

“Hello! Madam Lariette! Is Fayern around? I have brought some business for him!” The baldy greeted the lady watering the plants.

“Of course he’s around, my dear friend!” Before the lady got to respond, a bold and unrestrained voice sounded from within the house.

A large guy wearing a white-coloured shirt walked over and hugged the baldy.

“My dearest Fayern! Let me introduce to you— this is Sir Leylin who came from the central part of our city. He wishes to employ your Roran Hawks Mercenary Group to escort him to Extreme Night City!” The baldy explained to Fayern.

“Hello! Respected Sir, if you choose to go to Extreme Night City, then the Roran Hawks Mercenary Group would be your best bet. We have traversed the route over 100 times, and recognise every rock, nook and cranny on the path.”

Fayern bowed slightly towards Leylin and laughed as he spoke loudly.

Leylin noticed that this group leader’s eyes had been sizing up the three of them. Especially lingering on Greem for a while, as if

discovering something. However, he overlooked Leylin.

“A crude outer appearance but his inner qualities are astute! He is also a Preparatory Knight!” Leylin observed, and at this moment, the A.I. Chip scanned Fayern’s stats.

[Name: Fayern. Strength: 1.8, Agility: 1.5, Vitality: 1.7, Spiritual Force: 1.4]

These stats amongst Preparatory Knights was only considered average, however from Fayern’s callus and multiple scars on both of his hands, it can be seen that he has bountiful experience as a mercenary.

“We can discuss this later, won’t you invite us in to take a seat?” Leylin smiled, and gestured towards the villa.

“Oh, of course I will! Please enter!” Fayern patted his head and moved his body while bowing. His right hand stretched, making an invitation for them to enter.

After exiting the garden, it was soon the living room of the villa.

The floor was painted red, and on one the four surrounding walls there hung a rusty and stained cross blade. Beside it was a skull belonging to an elk, with bent antlers that were intertwined and had a jet-black lustre.

Fayern cordially invited Leylin and the group to have a rest on the sofa in the living room. He also asked Madam Lariette to give Leylin and the rest a beverage similar to black tea and then began to discuss the details.

“I heard from Nigel that this respected Young Master wants to go to Extreme Night City? If it is not inconvenient, could you tell me the reason why? Please forgive me, only after assessing the risk can the group make preparations for it.....” Fayern’s tone was rather sincere.

Leylin sipped on this beverage similar to black tea—it was rather sweet and salty and thus he did not like its taste—before he placed the cup down.

“Regarding the mission this time, I only wanted to start some business there, and require manpower for security. Do not worry about any other trouble!” Leylin looked at Fayern, while the latter was rather embarrassed and looked down.

Obviously, Fayern assumed Leylin was the bastard son of a noble who had lost in a power struggle and was sent away.

“The reason why I hire you was because the people in Roran City will not be easily bought when compared to those in Extreme Night City. Moreover, I have received news that there were some interesting events recently happening within Extreme Night City.....” Leylin smiled and said.

“Interesting events?” Group Leader Fayern guessed, “Is it about the incident where the the vegetation near the surroundings of Extreme Night City suddenly withered? ”

“Correct! A forest, the size of a small village, suddenly withered. It really makes one worried. Because of this incident, I believe it is necessary to increase the strength of the guards.”

“Concerning the earnings, I can give each a monthly salary of one gold coin. However, each one must sign an employment contract for agreeing to follow my commands for at least 2 years or more.”

Leylin interlocked the 10 fingers of his hands, as he gave his opinion.

Fayern’s face was indecisive, clearly he was making a choice. After being silent for some time, he struggled to say, “The other matters will be alright, what about the mission duration?”

“Although the period of two years is rather long, you don’t really have to always stay at Extreme Night City. I promise you during any idle period, I will grant them leave to visit their loved ones. Also, if they want to bring their wife and family over to Extreme Night City, I can also arrange an appropriate position for them.....” Leylin’s voice reverberated in the living room.

“Sir, I have seen your sincerity. I would like to talk it over with a few of my brothers; after all, I do not run the mercenary group alone. I can give you an answer tomorrow, so please be rest assured, Sir!”, said Fayern as he stood up and bowed slightly.

“Good! We will wait for good news from you!” While Fayern saluted, Leylin calmly got up and together with his servants and the bald trader, left the villa.

Chapter 56: A Visit

A golden object arced, flashing in the light, and landed in the arms of the bald trader.

“Take this; it’s the commission that you deserve.” Leylin said

“Many thanks for your conferment, most respected Young Master!” The baldy hurriedly bowed.

“Next, I need a housekeeper and two people who can keep accounts well! If you’re able to find them for me, this gold coin is yours!” Leylin flicked a gold coin on his hand.

“Let me think! Let me think!” Seeing that it was another gold coin waving its hand at him, the baldy suddenly became lively. He began muttering incoherently while grabbing his bald head and racking his brains. “That’s right! Old Welker! Old Welker was a housekeeper for a Baron before. Recently, He has been saying that he wants to come out again to make a living!”

The bald trader said.

“Very good! Bring me to him!” Leylin nodded his head approvingly.

Two days later, in the morning. While the mist still had not completely dissipated, there was still some frostiness lingering in the cold morning air.

Creak! Roran City gates opened slowly, and a horse carriage emerged from between them.

A dozen odd mercenaries, wearing broken armour and carrying metal spears and bows, escorted a large horse carriage as it slowly left the city.

In front of the horse carriage, Fayern was leading a brown colored handsome steed. Behind him was a 20 year old mercenary carrying a red-coloured flag. On it was embroidered the image of a hawk; the insignia of the Roran Hawks Mercenary Group.

Greem rode close to the horse carriage having given up the driver seat. The person who sat there instead was a white haired geezer. Although he faced the wind and his hair was blown about wildly, his clothes were impeccable and without any creases.

He was the housekeeper that Leylin got– Old Welker. Earlier, the Baron he served had gone bankrupt, hence, he became jobless. He was of the same beat as the bald trader who visited him and joined Leylin's party.

Going from Roran City to Extreme Night City only required 7 days. Roran Hawks Mercenary Group was worthy of Fayern's praise. They were extremely familiar with the route and could even find lodging along the way, saving them from the hassle of setting up camp.

7 days later, the group safely arrived at Extreme Night City.

Leylin lifted open the hanging screen on the horse carriage and saw that the clouds ahead were rather dark. The layers of cloud were crowded together, completely blocking any sunrays. It seemed that it would rain soon.

There was also a shadow cast on the surrounding bushes and grasses, which made it look very gloomy.

“Fayern!” Leylin walked out of the horse carriage’s door, “Didn’t you say that Extreme Night City has a large area of vegetation that withered? Which area was that?”

“Young Master!” Fayern grasped the reins firmly and reduced the pace of the horses to match the pace of the horse carriage.

“Extreme Night City is enormous. These mysterious happenings only belong to a small portion in the eastern part. Normally, we try our best to detour around that area. After all, humans have also done their best to avoid danger.....”

“Where is that forest?” Leylin leaned against the side of the door, as if he was enjoying the scenery.

“The eastern part of Dark Night Woods is closer to the core of the city!” Fayern looked at Leylin and he lowered his voice and said, “Dark Night Woods had an abundance of certain herbs. Ever since the withering event, however, the supply of herbs in Extreme Night City has decreased by 30%!”

“Is that so?” Leylin smiled. Extreme Night City was considered a large city in Eastwoods Province and one of the pillars of its economy was the herb industry. Now, it seemed that most likely the City’s Lord and his officers were worried about the situation.

“Dark Night Woods? I’ll remember it!” Although the woods in the kingdom were rather dangerous, this was only true for normal humans. Leylin even traversed his academy’s Abyssal Bone Forest, so naturally he was not worried about the present dangers.

“Did any of the herb gatherers disappear in the withering zone?” Leylin asked suddenly.

“Herb gatherers? You mean various hired hands, bandits and adventurers?” Fayern shrugged his shoulders, “The woods are full of dangers, and a few people dying is very normal, so who knows?”

As the two conversed, the horse carriage slowly approached Extreme Night City.

The city walls were not very high, yet they were extremely thick. It seemed to be made by piling granite rocks, and was extremely sturdy.

The guard at the city gates recognised Fayern and allowed the horse carriage to enter after payment of the toll fee.

“Let’s find lodging first!” Leylin ordered briefly.

Night approached, and Leylin sent Anna, who was serving him, away and stayed alone in the inn's room.

Opening the window, a cold gust of air blew in. The outside was extremely dark, and there were few lighted lamps.

Leylin closed the door and took out a blue coloured crystal ball from the sack he carried at all times.

This crystal ball was extremely small and let off a strange glow. In the centre of the glass were many golden specks of light that continuously rove about like little fireflies.

“Activate!” Leylin muttered an incantation.

The specks in the crystal ball started to shift about until finally forming a strange symbol.

This symbol was rather curvy and swirled continuously. It finally looked like an eye that was bloodshot..

Leylin's expression was extremely solemn. First he turned the symbol towards his face allowing his somewhat skinny face to be reflected onto the crystal ball.

“Shadow Calendar, Year 1032, Month of the severe cold, Day of the ravens weeping.” Leylin enunciated slowly in an extremely distinct voice.

“Today, I have arrived at Extreme Night City and am currently residing at Hoof’s Inn.” Leylin turned the crystal ball so the surroundings were reflected into the symbol inside. He then walked over to the windowsill and soaked up the imagery outside.

“Currently, news has it that the withering area belongs to the east area, Dark Night Woods. As of this recording, there have been no reports of any member’s death. Tomorrow I will prepare to set off and enquire, maybe gather new information.”

“The above mentioned records are by: Level 2 Acolyte, Leylin Farlier!”

After he finished speaking, Leylin wiped the crystal ball with his pale white fingers. Hehe! Hehe! From within the crystal ball came a strange sound, like a kid’s laughter. Following which, the eye symbol flickered and disappeared, turning back into countless golden specks of light

The crystal ball was given by the academy to Leylin to be used as proof of having undertaken the mission.

The crystal ball was able to record a few scenes and voices. All that Leylin had to do was to record every important event during the mission. He could then hand it over as proof upon returning to the academy.

Of course, the crystal ball's controlling right was with Leylin. As long as he did not want to activate it, the crystal ball would not be able to record anything without his magical support.

This was why Abyssal Bone Forest Academy dared to allow their acolytes to go out on long term missions without fear of being duped.

“From Fayern's description, the withering danger zone is not that huge. I'm afraid that it could either be some tree demons or organisms that feed on humans. A Level 2 Acolyte would be more than enough to deal with them!”

Leylin weighed things carefully, “I don't have to be that frantic, I still have over two years! I should first send some mercenaries over to have a look.....”

“The most important thing at hand now is to settle down here. Moreover, I have to visit a 'friend'..... Leylin's lips curved into a mysterious smile.

Although the location of Extreme Night City was rather remote, it was close to a few Magi resource points. There was even a Magic Crystal Mine nearby that was being excavated. Of course, the resources were already exhausted, but they still attracted a good number of wandering Magi and small families. It even gave rise to a small scale Magus market and was indicated on the map Bicky gave.

Moreover, within the short span of time while they were entering the city, the A.I. Chip had already picked out several energy waves emitted by other acolytes. It seems that there were quite a few acolytes living in this city.

This was extremely normal, as wandering magicians or those who were reclusive preferred remote towns to settle in, and to better conceal their identities.

Of course, due to having longer lifespans, appearance and radiation emissions, they cannot stay in the same area for long, often changing locations after a few years.

While Leylin was thinking thus, he yelled, “Anna!”

“Young Master, what are your instructions!” Not long after, Anna entered wearing a beautiful red dress. As she curtsied, her snow white calves were revealed.

“Prepare a gift; I want to pay someone a visit tomorrow!”

“As to the specifics, Welker will tell you!” Leylin yawned and stated blandly.

After dismissing the somewhat disappointed Anna, Leylin casually set up an energy particle array as an early warning device before he blew out the candles and entered dreamland.

The next morning, Leylin left with Anna who brought along a

beautiful hat.

“Is this the gift that Old Welker picked?” Leylin took the cap and gave it a once-over, realising that it was made of beast hide. It was very smooth to the touch, and there was also a feather stuck on it.

“Housekeeper Welker said that in Extreme Night City, Sticking the Night Hawk’s feather on a leather cap represents peaceful intent and friendliness. It is the gift of choice when paying a visit for the first time!” Anna put on a rather frightened expression.

“Young.....Young Master! Are you going to visit another ‘Sire’?” Anna’s voice became somewhat shaky.

“Yes! He is also an acolyte!” Leylin lowered his voice, so that it was only audible to Anna and himself.

After he spoke, he saw the young girl’s shoulder trembled. Leylin smiled, Anna was sold to a Magus before she was resold as a slave. It seemed to have been a traumatic experience for her.

“If you’re afraid, you can always go back first!” Leylin moved forward and embraced Anna’s slender waist.

“No! Anna wants to go together with Young Master!” Anna forced herself to smile.

Leylin shook his head, “Follow me if you want to!”

Extreme Night City's construction was somewhat gothic with sharp spikes on the roof tops. The pavements were also layered with smooth rocks giving the impression that Extreme Night City was one of the wealthier cities around.

As Leylin and Anna neared the eastern side of the city, the people's outfits here became much more urbane than that of other places and the decorations on the buildings became more gorgeous too.

“It seems like the east of Extreme Night City is where the nobles and scholars congregate.”

Leylin looked at the clusters of flowers on both sides of the road. There was even an outdoor fountain. He could not help but smile as he said to Anna.

Afterwards, the two of them came to a white-coloured two storey villa. On the door plate was hung, “Cecelia Main Street, 59”.

Chapter 57: Murphy

Leylin rang the doorbell that hung on the door. A crisp ring of a bell could be heard, followed by the noise of scurrying footsteps.

“Hello! May I ask who you are? Do you have an appointment?” A meticulous looking butler appeared in front of Leylin.

“Leylin Farlier, I am here to visit the owner of this villa!” Leylin smiled.

The butler obviously looked distressed as he said, “Sir, as you know, my master, Murphy, is a renowned scholar. His schedule every day is extremely packed, perhaps.....”

At this moment, a girl, who seemed like the maid, hurriedly ran over and whispered into the butler’s ears.

The butler’s complexion immediately changed as he bowed deeply, “Master invites you into the living room!”

Leylin smiled as he retrieved the energy waves he radiated.

Upon entering inside the villa, there was a corridor littered with various art pieces like paintings and exhibited on the faint yellow colored walls were all kinds of oil paintings, and other specimens of art, which were rather pleasing to the eyes.

As the living room came into view, it became quite obvious that it was a spacious house.

The decor in the room was extremely aesthetic. Although there were no dazzling golden or silver items or gems, these pieces had an aura of history and gave off a feeling of understated elegance.

Beside the fireplace in the living room, an old scholar with white brows and beard lounged on a dark red recliner.

The old man's eyes seemed muddy with only occasional traces of intelligence within.

The old man's originally squinted eyes opened upon seeing Leylin. He stood up and spread his arms in an embracing gesture, "Welcome, my young friend!"

Leylin went forward to hug the old man, "It is an honour to be able to meet you! I hope you like this present I brought for you!"

Anna stepped forward and handed over to the butler an extremely exquisite cap.

"I like the tail feathers of the night hawk. They represent peace!" The old man waved his hands, "Lille, you may take your leave, I want to have a good chat with this friend of mine!"

"Take your leave too!" Leylin told Anna who was beside him.

After extending their salutations, the few maids and the butler left, closing the door behind them. Very soon, there was only Leylin and the old man left in the living room.

“Alright, let’s reintroduce ourselves! Murphy, Level 3 Acolyte! I have been a resident of Extreme Night City for 3 years now.....” The old man’s eyes showed signs of his reminiscing past events.

“So then, guest from afar, how about you?”

“Leylin Farlier, Level 2 Acolyte and wandering Magus. I have recently come to Extreme Night City and wish to reside here for several years.” Leylin smiled and executed the bow between Magi.

“I detect signs of youth in your body. Being able to advance into Level 2 Acolyte at this age, you have a rather great aptitude!” Murphy sighed in admiration.

“I was just lucky.....” Leylin demurred. Although the old man’s body had degenerated, the energy waves of a Level 3 Acolyte told anyone that it was not good to provoke him.

“A.I. Chip, initiate scan!”

[Murphy. Strength: 1.5, Agility: 1.4, Vitality: 2.9, Spiritual Force: 2.9, Magical Power: 8. Status: Healthy. Evaluation: Level 3 Acolyte, relatively dangerous!]

The A.I. Chip faithfully relayed the figures onto Leylin's field of vision.

Being a wandering Level 3 Acolyte, Murphy's array of magic spells definitely surpassed Leylin's. Moreover, he would have some extremely-difficult-to-deal-with trump cards hidden to protect his life.

However, Leylin came with good intentions. From the A.I. Chip's area scan, the number of acolytes residing in Extreme Night City was not high. As for this Murphy, he radiated one of the strongest energy waves.

After exchanging several polite greetings, Leylin delved immediately into the main purpose of his visit.

"So it's like this! I wish to reside permanently in Extreme Night City, and even open an ingredients shop. You know, the procedures are extremely tedious, and I also need a resident to act as my guarantor....."

"So you came here to look for me?" Murphy smiled, and drank the cup of red tea that was on the table.

"To be honest, as an ambitious and truth seeking Magus, gold coins and the like should no longer sway us. Although I don't know why you arrived at this conclusion, on a whim perhaps? Or for some other reason? To me, this indeed is a small matter!"

“Coincidentally, I have some friendly relations with the Lord of Extreme Night City. One of his sons is also under my tutelage. Moreover, any city lord will not refuse the request of a Mysterious Entity..... The residential procedures here in Extreme Night City, as well as the shop permit, can all be settled very easily.” Murphy guaranteed.

“Then I must really thank you!” Leylin nodded his head, “If there are any areas I could help you with, do not hesitate to ask!”

Although this was said to satisfy the requirements of etiquette, both Leylin and the old man knew that it was mentioned as a mere courtesy.

The handling of residential procedures may be difficult to regular humans. However, for a famous scholar like Murphy, it was only a matter of a few words. Even if Leylin wanted to handle these procedures by himself, he would have to spend more time than the old man.

For both Murphy and Leylin, this matter was simply a means to establish a basic friendship of convenience between them.

“Extreme Night City is a peaceful and quiet place. If you wish to have peaceful days then this place will definitely meet your needs. Later on, I will also introduce you to a few friends of mine. However, there are some set conventional customs that have to be complied with.....Don’t worry, they are all customary practices, for example, one should not massacre the residents or something

like that!”

“I definitely agree!” Leylin’s coming to Extreme Night City was to avoid the chaos of war and intrigue. Naturally he would not do anything that would draw attention to himself.

Leylin and Murphy then talked about many Magi related questions, from how to stabilise a spell model for advanced levels to some of Murphy’s personal adventures.

Although Murphy was only a Level 3 Acolyte, his experience was abundant due to having remained at this level for a long time already. This made Leylin feel that the trip was not in vain.

On the other hand, Leylin’s vast knowledge and eidetic memory shocked Murphy.

Both of them regretted not having met earlier. They even had their lunch together all the way until dusk before Murphy let Leylin leave. When they bade farewell, they even arranged for their next meeting.

“According to what Murphy said, the magicians in Extreme Night City are all of the acolyte level. As for the few nearby cities, official Magi were also extremely rare making this place very suitable for an acolyte to live in!”

The inquiries he made today caused Leylin to feel at ease, letting him walk at a slower and a more relaxed pace.

“Only regarding this case where plants and wood withered is Murphy completely ignorant. After all, he is already quite old and does not wish to take risks.....”

The two street lamps were lit with a dim yellow flame, allowing Leylin to see the road ahead.

Anna followed quietly behind Leylin. Being an outstanding maid, she obviously knew what she had to do, which was not to interrupt Leylin while he was deep in thought.

After Leylin ran through a simulation of his plans one more time, they had both arrived at the inn.

“Young Master!” “Sir!”

Old Welker, Greem and Fraser came forward to receive them.

Leylin nodded his head, “After dinner all of you come to my room. There are many things I want to inform all of you regarding my future plans!”

Dinner was vegetable salad and mutton soup, followed by huge pieces of dried cookies. After Leylin finished and allowed Anna to clean up, the core people among his subordinates went to Leylin’s room.

Leylin sat on a chair wrapped in beast hide and quietly listened to their reports.

“Welker, how was the search for a residence?”

“Young Master, Old Welker has already contacted a Knight who is preparing to move to Sage Province. He is willing to sell a small manor in Extreme Night City to you.” Old Welker reported. Despite being an old man, he was brimming with energy after finding them a new home.

“Very good, what is the area like? Is the place enough to house all of us? How much is it?” Leylin asked.

“Please be at ease Young Master. Old Welker, I have gone to the manor and taken a look today. The area was very big and has no problem accommodating a hundred people. Moreover, there is even an oil palm forest, a fish pond and a mill. Knight Victor originally built it according to a baron’s standards. He never thought that it would change ownership this quickly. As for the price, Knight Victor has set it at 5000 gold coins!”

“It’s not that expensive, gold coins aren’t an issue!” Leylin twined his fingers. To a Magus, such earthly items as gold coins are insignificant. What they were concerned with were only Magic Crystals, high-grade ingredients, and the acquisition of remnant ancient knowledge.

Leylin had high-grade Magic Crystals of his own. Any one piece would be able to fetch a price far surpassing this amount of gold

coins. However, Leylin was not prepared to do that. After all, Magic Crystals were rarer. If he really could not get the gold coins, then he would go borrow some from Murphy in exchange for a few potions—which was not a bad idea at all.

“Very well!” Let’s take a look tomorrow. If the price and the area are both suitable, we can sign the contract immediately.” Leylin nodded his head, saying, “Also, go walk the streets and scout something for me. Recently, the herbs available in Extreme Night City have decreased. There will definitely be many small-sized shops that can no longer manage and are about to close down. Go and look into them first!”

“Forgive me for asking, but Young Master, are you thinking of opening a herb shop? The permit for doing such business has rather strict requirements.....” Fayern said.

“Regarding that, none of you have to worry. I have already made arrangements. The permit will be here in a few days.”

Hearing this, Fayern and Old Welker were dazed. To be able to guarantee such a thing quite easily, Leylin’s identity as a noble had already been confirmed.

“In Poolfield Kingdom, the nobility represents progress and hope!”

With this in mind, their gazes towards Leylin became more fervent.

Fayern silently clenched his fists. Being one of the few who could look ahead, he naturally knew that he could not work as a mercenary for much longer. Most of the mercenaries carried a lot of injuries and scars with to their graves knowing little enjoyment in their typically short lives. However, getting hired by this Sir Leylin as his private army could be the fastest way out of the trade.

Chapter 58: A Banquet

The brilliant rays of the sun lit up the path with a golden light. Walking on it was like walking on a golden, paved road.

Today Leylin had especially changed into formal ceremonial attire. He had Greem personally drive the horse carriage to Murphy's villa.

Similarly, Murphy also wore formal attire and carried a black cane as he waited. After seeing Leylin, his wrinkled face revealed a joyous expression, "Welcome, my friend!"

"My apologies for being a little late!" Leylin opened the window and said.

"The agreed time isn't up yet, I just deliberately got out earlier!" Murphy got into the horse carriage with the help of his servant. With the crack of the whip, Greem drove the horse carriage towards the centre of the city.

"City Lord's banquet is to be held today. He invited you too. After all, as the owner, he has developed a curiosity for any guest with strength..." Murphy left his sentence hanging.

"That's understandable!" Leylin answered. As someone who has control over a city, seeking Leylin out only after so many days since he had entered the city was somewhat surprising.

“Are you somewhat bored?” Murphy noticed Leylin’s indifference.

“To be honest, I am not adept at these kinds of social interaction. Given a choice, I’d rather stay inside my experiment lab...” Leylin smiled wryly.

“Haha...” Murphy let off a benign laugh, “I felt exactly the same way when I was younger! However, you must learn to enjoy life, young man! Compared to tasteless experiments, delicacies and fervent, unrestrained women can sometimes lead you towards excitement!”

Leylin nodded his head. This was actually the difference between retired magicians and newly advanced ones.

Murphy has no way of advancing in the path of a Magus anymore, so he could only divert his enthusiasm towards other areas. As for Leylin, he still had a lot of options, so he naturally would make use of the time to cultivate—not waste it on such mundane matters.

“Brighten up kid!” There are several comrades I will introduce you to....” Murphy smiled lightly.

“Could they be...?” Leylin’s eyes flashed.

“Indeed! They are acolytes like us, and they are all younger than me. You would have some common interests to talk about.”

“I’m starting to look forward to this banquet now!” Leylin’s lips curled up and smiled.

The City Lord’s castle was in the heart of Extreme Night City. Standing guard around it were two rows of fully equipped black-armoured arms men.

“Those are the Black Iron Guards of Extreme Night City’s Lord, Viscount Jackson. They once defeated a 500-man army troop with roughly hundred men.

After alighting the horse carriage, Murphy introduced Leylin.

Leylin looked around. There were several other horse carriages in the vicinity. From time to time, gentlemen in lavish attire and ladies in low-cut ball gowns got down.

Murphy appeared to have quite a reputation amongst this circle of nobles based on the exuberant greetings Murphy happily responded to. They even chatted for a while before moving on.

Upon seeing Murphy, the guard at the door ran in immediately. Not long after, an extremely loud voice boomed from within.

“Murphy, my friend! You have finally arrived!” Accompanying the voice, a burly middle-aged man walked out of the castle. The nobles and troops around respectfully greeted him. This apparently was Viscount Jackson of Extreme Night City.

Leylin's height in the South Coast area was considered average, but this Viscount Jackson was actually taller than him by two heads. He had the classic western features and an extremely wide forehead. He even had extremely long sideburns.

Jackson gave Murphy a firm hug, "Little Jackson has always been asking about you!"

"I too miss that cute fellow. He is one of the smartest amongst all my students!" Murphy said.

"This is a good friend of mine from far away, Sire Leylin Farlier!" Murphy introduced Leylin to Viscount Jackson.

"Extreme Night City welcomes you!" Jackson sized up Leylin, and opened his broad shoulders, giving Leylin a hug.

Leylin's smile was somewhat stiff, which he quickly concealed.

Right at that moment, he was completely distracted by the stats shown by the A.I. Chip.

[Jackson. Strength: 7.9, Agility: 4.5, Vitality: 6.3, Spiritual Force: 3.5. State: Healthy. This human is deemed as dangerous, it is strongly suggested that the Host maintain a distance of 50 metres from this person.]

“These stats can only belong to a Grand Knight!” Leylin’s pupils shrank.

“The Vitality of Grand Knights is extremely high. And, after constant activation and stimulation of their internal life energy, they have surpassed the bottleneck that held back most humans. Moreover, they have also developed a slight resistance to Rank 0 spells.” Leylin recalled a description he had read before.

“Very well! You should be a Knight too, right?” Lord Jackson was slightly astonished by Leylin’s strength, and he looked upon Leylin now in a friendlier light.

“I only recently advanced, and am nowhere close to you!”

Leylin said humbly and ordered the A.I. Chip, “A.I. Chip! Show me a simulation if I were to fight against this City Lord Jackson.”

[Beep! Establishing parameters, inputting data, simulating battle scenario, predicting outcome....]

A large light screen flashed continuously, and the results:

[Battle simulation complete. 50 metres and beyond, Host win rate is 89.8%. Between 20 to 50 metres, Host win rate is 58.7%.

Below 20 metres, Host win rate is 33.9%!]

“As expected, the physical power of Grand Knights is extremely astounding. They are capable of closing the distance before a magician can cast a spell. If magicians do not try to stay out of range, they would be on the short end of the stick!”

Leylin’s expression did not change as he walked together with Murphy into the castle’s hall.

It was obvious that the large hall had been decorated for the occasion. The marbled floor was so smooth that it reflected the figures of people walking around on it.

A huge golden chandelier hung from the centre of the large hall. It was densely packed with lighted candles that shone through the surrounding coloured crystals letting out a colourful light.

At the side of this huge hall, was an orchestra of musicians wearing swallowtail coats and performing a slow enjoyable tune.

The area filled with long tables covered in white cloth. On these tables were gold and silver platters with various fruits and barbecued meat. On the side, there were even flasks and silver flagons, which emitted the strong aroma of wine.

Right in the centre was a huge open space where many of the nobility were waltzing to the music.

“It seems like a ball with a buffet on the side!” Leylin nodded his head.

“Go enjoy yourself! I’ll have to say hello to a few old friends!” Murphy said to Leylin.

“Please do!” Leylin gestured with his head in assent. He then picked up a cup of grape wine and sat on a nearby sofa.

Not long after, he spotted Murphy together with a number of coquettish women in revealing outfits. They even entered a small side room, which made him rather speechless.

“He’s so old and he still wants to pretend to be rather strong, can he even make it?”

“Do you mind if I sit beside you?” Just as Leylin was thinking such indecent thoughts, an elegant voice sounded beside him.

Leylin raised his head and saw a young lady wearing a purple gown. She had a head of golden hair that fell to her shoulders like a waterfall; even her skin was a milky white.

Looking around, Leylin discovered that there was no one else near him. Leylin was quite good looking and kept himself well groomed, which naturally attracted a few young ladies.

“Of course I don’t mind!” Leylin smiled lightly and chatted happily with the young lady.

To him, the combination of his memories from a previous life and the memories of this body’s previous owner made making a little girl happy an easy task.

Not long after, the young lady was completely enraptured by Leylin’s made-up stories.

“Haha...Haha, running naked on the street? He actually did that?” The young lady completely lost her earlier elegance; she laughed almost uproariously without much of her former delicate demeanor. This drew a lot of curious stares from the people close by.

“Sorry to interrupt you Leylin! However, our friends are here!”

Murphy, followed closely by several noble women with whom he had just tangled violently, walked over. Surprisingly, his attire was still extremely neat and tidy, which left Leylin rather shocked.

“Alright, I have to go!” Leylin made a helpless gesture and rose from the sofa.

“This...Sir! After talking for so long, I haven’t asked for your name yet?” The young lady slapped her forehead.

“Leylin Farlier, just call me Leylin!”

“I...I’m Alicia, my house is located at Cecelia Main Street, 34. You’re welcomed to come over to play anytime!”

“Haha, I never thought that you might be so sought after by ladies huh!” After the both of them left, Murphy made fun of Leylin.

“It’s only a young lady who likes to listen to stories. Have they arrived?” Leylin asked.

“They’re all here, followed me!”

Murphy said, and brought Leylin to a small room beside the dance hall.

There were several acolytes already waiting in the room. Leylin could sense that their energy waves made them either Level 1 or Level 2 Acolytes.

Murphy obviously had the highest standing in this circle. When he entered, the acolytes all stood up to receive him.

“Alright!” Murphy swept his gaze around, “Let me introduce all of you to a new comrade! Leylin, he came from the west....”

After Leylin’s self-introduction was over, he could not help but ask Murphy, “Would a gathering like this cause an issue?”

“No worries, Jackson has reared some Beastmen and their noses are more sensitive than a dog’s. He already knew of our identities long ago. It’s just that all of us do not mention it explicitly!”

An acolyte with acne spoke, picking up a silver flagon and drinking from it from time to time.

“Oh! Mayflower, my Mayflower!” At this moment, a guy’s heavy panting sounded.

“Oh! Baby! So hot, so good!” A woman’s murmuring groans followed soon after.

It seems like there was a couple in ardent passion in the room next door.

Black lines formed on Murphy’s face. He promptly swung his hand and a faint energy membrane enveloped the room isolating the noise of the outside world. “This is an accident, an accident!” His old face actually reflected his embarrassment.

Leylin wanted to faint, and there was a voice that repeatedly echoed in his mind. “Alright! I really shouldn’t harbour any hope toward this group of acolytes. They are all just a bunch of trash that has completely lost their motivation and prudence!”

Chapter 59: Recording

Of course, on the surface, Leylin continued to pretend that he was naive as he began to converse in a friendly and amicable manner with this group of acolytes.

After the ball ended, the various horse carriages from different families set off. In a secret chamber within the City Lord's castle, the Viscount Jackson that Leylin saw today was talking to his subordinate.

“Is it confirmed?”

“I have detected the smell of a Mysterious Entity on his body. It has also been confirmed that he is extremely young!” The person who replied was draped in black robes; tufts of yellow fur could be glimpsed growing on his face.

“He is different from those befuddled acolytes. I do not think he will be retiring at such a young age. No matter if he is hiding from enemies or is concealing some other motive, his appearance is not good news for us!” A worried expression flickered through Jackson's steely face.

“Please pardon my forthrightness! Although we are able to deal with a Mysterious Entity right now, if we draw the ire of the rest of them, then whatever gains we achieve would not make up for the losses we may incur!”

The Half-Beast Man said slowly.

“Indeed!” Jackson became quiet for some time before giving out an order, “Do not incur the wrath of the other party, but never let him out of your sight!”

“I understand!” The Half-Beast Man disappeared into the darkness....

Ever since the ball, Leylin’s agenda progressed extremely quickly. First, he borrowed 4500 gold coins from Murphy to buy the villa.

Afterwards, through the search done by Old Welker, Leylin chose a medicine shop that was about to close down but had a good geographic position. He took over it and obtained the shop permit.

With the unexpected enthusiastic help from the City Lord’s castle, many procedures were actually settled in a matter of days.

Of course, Leylin discovered a few spies loitering around the medicine shop and the villa. However, these secretive parties exercised restraint against Leylin, and only made basic surveillance measures, not insinuating their influence onto Leylin’s people. So, Leylin was not too bothered by their presence either.

Through Murphy, he hired a few pharmacists. Once the minimum standards for managing the medicine shop were met, he then completely handed over the reins to his core personnel and buried himself in his magic experiments.

After some renovation, the Knight's villa looked even newer than when it was brand new.

Previously, the Knight stayed in a three storey high, white-brick loft. Now, Leylin chose the few really big rooms for his private use.

The largest of these was used as his bedroom while the rooms on both sides served as a study room and an experiment lab. After putting in place a few detection spells he had learned at Abyssal Bone Forest Academy as an early warning grid, he passed down strict orders to his subordinates that without his order, no one was access to these rooms.

As for Greem and Fraser, they were posted near the master bedroom, as guards.

Fayern and other mercenaries were all given guard duty that rotated between the villa and the medicine shop. Leylin also gave out notices that serious and hardworking people may purchase small tracts of land on his property in 3 years later, permanent residence being a possibility for qualified persons or families. This was a very strong motivation for normal mercenaries and farmers.

Occasionally, Leylin looked through the windows and saw the serious hardworking serious mercenaries and farmers at work.

Because he always stayed at the villa, apart from the occasional visit to Murphy's place, he rarely even went to the medicine shop. The rumors that were slowly spreading outside gained Leylin the reputation of a benevolent yet lazy villa owner.

“Young Master! The people from the medicine shop are here!” Anna’s voice travelled through the door.

“Let them drop off the items in the living room and get Greem to move them to the experiment lab!” Leylin used his fingers to tap on the window pane, letting off a dull thudding noise.

“Your wish is my command!” The voice very soon was replaced with noises of things being moved about.

A dozen minutes later, Leylin came to the experiment lab.

Right now, the originally spacious experiment was littered with crates and a few wooden long tables. There were no windows in the room, and only a chandelier hung from the ceiling emitting a dim glow.

“Young Master! According to your orders, the medicine shop has acquired for you every type of herb that can be found in the market.”

Anna lifted her dress and curtsied. She turned around and opened a red wooden crate revealing stacks of tied roots and stems, as well as many other herbs of indeterminate quantity and type. On the side of each stack or bundle was stuck a yellow paper note indicating the names of these herbs.

“Also, these are all the formulas that normal pharmacists own.

They are only to normal humans.

Anna handed over yet another stack of dark yellow parchment notes.

Leylin's eyes skimmed over these and placed the list on one of the long tables.

"All of you may leave! Anna, stay behind!" Leylin waved towards Greem and his assistants.

Greem bowed and strode through the large heavy door, closing it behind him.

With a huge clang, the experiment lab's lighting turned even dimmer.

Leylin's brows furrowed. He took out a white coloured rock from his sack.

He then pressed his fingers lightly on the rock and a layer of bright white light radiated from it.

This was a Sunlight Rock. It is an item that magicians normally use during their travels. Slight radiation energy is contained in it that can let out a bright light for a prolonged period of time.

However, this radiation was extremely small and could only be

used for illumination.

“This is much brighter than before!” Leylin was very satisfied as he looked at his well-lit surroundings. He then said to Anna, “Store the herbs well, and arrange them in an orderly fashion on the experiment table!”

“Yes.” Anna hurried with her task.

Leylin casually picked up a purple coloured fruit. This fruit was the size of a thumb. It had lost all the water contained on its surface, thus its wrinkly exterior. Its weight was extremely light too.

“According to the medicine books delivered yesterday, this is the Warter Fruit, a type of fruit that grows in swamps.”

Leylin placed a finger on the surface of the fruit, “A.I. Chip! Extract data and save it in your databanks!”

Right now he no longer had to ingest the herbs. He could determine their medicinal properties with a mere touch.

[Beep! Data extraction in progress!]

In Leylin’s field of vision, the A.I. Chip overlaid a light blue screen, with many numbers and figures that changed constantly.

[Name: Warter Fruit. The area produced: Swamps. Uses: Mild poisonous properties with a numbing effect. Data stored!]

The A.I. Chip's voice intoned before a second had gone by.

“Very good. Again!” Leylin picked up another dried stem.

This was one of the reasons why Leylin had opened a medicine shop. Through his years of being an apprentice under Kroft, he recorded almost all the herbs used by Potioneering Masters, storing it into the A.I. Chip's data banks.

However, those were special ingredients used by the Magi. As for herbs used by normal people, the A.I. Chip had no record of them. He now had to fill these missing bits of information.

Moreover, Leylin obtained two ancient potion formulas from his mentor and wanted to find substitutes for them. This could only be accomplished through innumerable experimentation and the consumption of huge amounts of precious and rare herbs. Even if Leylin had the A.I. Chip, he could not get around this step in the process.

With such a vast undertaking, Leylin could see no end to the task at hand even if he expended all his Magic Crystals.

However, if some ingredients could be substituted with herbs used by normal humans, he could economise by a huge margin.

“Although this might just be a daydream, the advantage was the potential savings a successful substitution promised. No matter how many experiments, it would still be considered a favorable exchange. Thus, by utilising the terrifying processing capabilities of the A.I. Chip, there is a glimmer of hope.

Leylin’s gaze was resolute, “Anyway, no matter how many ingredients I consume, they are just ingredients used by normal humans. I only need to spend some gold coins to be able to buy them again. This is much better than spending Magic Crystals!”

As for the investigation he commissioned, it had long since been tossed to the back of Leylin’s mind.

After all, there were still two odd years of time and as long as he fully carried it out within these two years his mission would be counted as accomplished.

Even if the mission were to fail, because Kroft was his teacher, the worst punishment would be a fine a few Magic Crystals. Hence, Leylin was not the least bit worried.

Time slowly passed, and the experiment lab became quiet. There were only the occasional scraping noises Anna made when placing herbs on the table.

Two days later, only Leylin remained in the lab. His face had a happy glow to it.

[3217 types of herbs successfully stored in the databank.
Would you like to create a separate folder?]

The A.I. Chip's voice intoned.

“No! Combine them with the earlier record we made of some normal ingredients, establish a folder using the name “Compendium of ordinary ingredients”! Leylin ordered.

[Folder created...transferring relevant simulation models into the databank]

“Alright, next will be an analysis of the various combinations of medicinal properties. This is a huge project, even with the simulation I must still carry out experiments to verify the actual data and increase the probability of getting the results I desire.”

Leylin thought.

“Young Master, it's time for dinner.” Anna's muted voice sounded through the door.

“Okay, I’m coming out.” When it was time to work, he worked; and when it was time to rest, he rested. This was his principle for living. He would seldom do things like neglect food and rest to conduct more experiments, unlike other magicians.

To him, along the path of pursuing truth, appropriate rest was allowed.

Leylin smiled and tidied up the experiment table before leaving the lab.

“When I am conducting important experiments, I will hang a sign on the door. At that time, do not interrupt me no matter how many days I stay inside. Do you understand?” Leylin told Anna who was serving him.

“I’ll do as you bid, Young Master.”

“And what’s for dinner?” Leylin walked towards one side of the room. Although many masters practiced eating some meals together with their subordinates, this did not fit the customs of the Magi. So Leylin ate alone most of the time.

Several plates of food covered with hemispherical cloche tableware were arranged on a serving platter and placed on a small, round and white-colored table.

“It’s veal with purple vegetable soup and apple strawberry pie!” Anna said lightly, lifted the cover. A strong appetising aroma

permeated the air.

“Not bad!” Leylin nodded his head as he let Anna place a napkin around his neck. He picked up the knife and dinner fork and began to eat.

“Also, remember to remind me tomorrow to set aside an hour of my time every day for Knight training!”

Leylin said to Anna, having suddenly recalled something. He had already ignited his internal life energy. As a Knight, he only needed to train some more to get his various stats above 3. Although Leylin planned to walk the path of a Magus, he had nothing to lose by increasing his stats.

Chapter 60: Hove Violet Leaves

The cold winter breeze was blowing and a bone-piercing chill permeated the air.

On a small field, Leylin was practising his cross-blade techniques while half-naked.

The muscles on his chest had become more defined. Although not very prominent, they were very robust, exuding a sense of vitality.

Forward! Uppercut! Pierce! Every move was a flawless, textbook-perfect execution.

After Leylin finished his training, Anna– who was observing from the side– hurriedly ran forward and handed him a white towel.

Leylin dried his sweat and called his stats onto his visual field.

[Leylin Farlier, Level 2 Acolyte, Knight. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 3.3, Vitality: 3.2, Spiritual Force: 4.7, Magical Power: 4.0. Status: Healthy]

“A.I. Chip, what is the progress from today’s training?”

[Assessment in progress! Host's internal life energy has been raised to the maximum, further increase is not possible at the moment!]

The A.I. Chip's voice intoned.

“This day has finally arrived!” Leylin exclaimed, “Being able to maximize these stats was already good enough. Even if I were to spend more time, I will not necessarily gain anything more. From now on his Knight training could be put on hold. After all, I just need to practice my blade skills in the future, so they don't get rusty. With the A.I. Chip, this is no challenge at all.”

After the early morning Knight training ended, Leylin took a brief respite and waited until he was fully recovered before burying his head in more experiments.

Within the lab, Leylin placed a violet leaf into a beaker and added to it one spatula of a green-black, ink-like solution. He then lit a flame underneath the beaker.

The bright yellow fire continuously licked the bottom of the beaker, and purple bubbles began to froth.

“A.I. Chip! Record this down. Test 145, items of substitution: Hove Violet Leaves, Ninuo Root.”

[Record complete.]

The A.I. Chip's voice intoned as it recorded in detail the various medicinal properties and reactions obtained through the experiment.

In this span of time, Leylin had already conducted more than a hundred experiments and made use of the A.I. Chip's simulation feature over tens of thousands of times.

“This is the moment! I have a very strong premonition that it'll be successful this time.”

As he murmured to himself, Leylin glanced at the volatile, green-and purple-coloured mixture.

Using normal human herbs as ingredients to synthesize the medicinal properties of magic herbs just seemed to be a fantasy, besides there were countless hurdles to overcome.

Although these experiments required ingredients that could be bought with gold coins, some magic ingredients were still needed to catalyse certain aspects of the experiment.

These were all magic ingredients that Leylin had acquired from the Magus Market. He had now almost used up all of them all.

Without the A.I. Chip simulating a large proportion of his

experiments, Leylin's rate of consumption would far outstrip his current rate.

Synthesizing a few important ingredients could already dry up Leylin's resources.

Crash!

The violet leaf in the beaker completely dissolved and the green coloured liquid became more translucent.

"This is it!" Leylin eyes widened. He picked up a glass rod and stirred in a counterclockwise direction at the same time extending a thread of Spiritual Force carefully into the contents of the beaker through the glass rod.

As the seconds became minutes, Leylin's face grew more and more solemn. A few beads of sweat even began to form on his forehead.

Ding Ling Ling! A crisp ringing sounded from the beaker. At the heart of the faint green liquid, many black wormlike dots appeared and began continuously extending themselves in all directions.

Leylin's expression did not change and his hands were as quick as a phantom, as he took a red-coloured pearl– lying on a petri dish nearby– and added it to the ongoing reaction.

Pi Pa! As the pearl was tossed inside, the black dots in the beaker

quickly retreated and the faint green liquid became fainter and fainter, completely turning transparent.

[Beep! Azure Potion main ingredient substitution succeeded! Assessed as capable of standing in for 45.8% of the main ingredient's medicinal properties.]

This prompt was extremely pleasing to Leylin's ears.

“After combining several conjectures into tens of thousands of the A.I. Chip's simulations, I have finally succeeded!” A corner of Leylin's lips quirked up into a smile and he clenched his fist tightly.

At the same time, Leylin deeply lamented about the fact even though he was a Potioneering Master, it was difficult to modify formulas.

He had the original formula, and the A.I. Chip to run simulations for him. This saved a lot of time and ingredients. Even so, he took this long to successfully modify the formula. Instead, if it was his Senior Merlin, he might not even be able to afford the cost of the ingredients, and that also true for the powerful family that supported him behind the scenes.

Squandering precious ingredients for a gamble with a chance of less than one in ten thousand was simply illogical to the typical Magus.

Moreover, during the process of experimentation, each failure would be an agonizing psychological burn that would singe the psyche of a Potioneering Master, day and night. If one could actually change the formula, then that would be out of pure luck, even for Potioneering Grandmasters who had abundant experiences and skill.

However, once the formula was changed, it would lead to huge profits, especially for a potion that could raise Spiritual Force.

“A.I. Chip! If I were to substitute the original ingredients, how much will the retained effect be?”

[Comparison in progress. Databank information is insufficient. Establishing conjecture. Simulating...Beep! The new formula will retain roughly 35.4% of the original's effectiveness.]

“This is on the low side, but I have no choice. The substituted ingredients are mainly normal ones even commoners can obtain. Quantity can compensate whatever is lacking in quality.”

Leylin analysed the pros and cons of the new Azure Potion, “Based on this, the price could be in excess of 100,000 Magic Crystals. A pity, this formula was achieved with my current stats. For other people, the effect would be extremely hard to predict. Moreover, the procedures are extremely complicated and some steps are impossible to do without the A.I. Chip. Other

Potioneering Masters, will definitely fail many times when brewing this potion.”

In fact, it was clear to Leylin that even if he became an official Magus, once others became aware of this formula, he would not be able to hold onto it. After all, the ingredients for this new Spiritual Force formula could be bought in mass amounts. It would be game-changing for the lower levels of the various academies and factions. None of them would willingly let go of such an opportunity.

After making up his mind, he burned the formula completely into his memory. The potions he would brew would only be for personal consumption. Leylin then tidied up all traces of his experiments, before stepping through the door of the experiment lab.

“Young Master.” Anna, who was dozing on a chair nearby, got up in a hurry.

“Housekeeper Welker has been looking for you for two hours. There appears to be some crisis at the medicine shop!”

“Oh? Let him come to my study after dinner!” Leylin took off the soiled, sterile robe designed especially for his experiments and changed into more casual soft clothing.

“Apart from Welker, are there any other recent incidents?”

Leylin lounged on a nearby sofa. On the table beside it were purple grape-like fruits and some red berries, which Leylin usually liked to eat.

“Knight Fraser came over earlier and said that the reward mission you commissioned has some developments!”

Although Leylin did not give a high priority to the academy’s mission, some superficial work still had to be done. He, thus, issued a mission notice to the mercenaries and adventurers of Extreme Night City to scout the situation within the depths of the Dark Night Woods, the reward being 1000 gold pieces. It seems that the mission notice was beginning to bear fruit.

After dinner, Leylin received Old Welker and Fraser in his study.

Fraser wore leather armour and was as robust as ever. As for Old Welker, he looked careworn and his body had hunched over.

Old Welker bowed towards Leylin, “Respected Young Master, our earnings from the medicine shop this month is....”

“No need for that!” Leylin leaned against the study table behind him and waved his hands interrupting Old Welker’s speech, “Pass down instructions to buy all Hove Violet Leaves, Ninuo Roots and Three Flowered Snake Fruits....”

“Then Young Master, how many of them are we buying?”

“All!”

“All?” Old Welker raised his head and looked at Leylin in astonishment.

“That’s right. The three ingredients that I’ve stated, you must buy all of them in the market, and store them at the villa.” Leylin remained indifferent as he said this.

“But...may I remind the Young Master, the medicine shop business is not doing well, together with the herbs that Young Master purchased from time to time, our balance books right now are already in a precarious state....” If not for the villa forking out gold coins all the time, the shop would have been bankrupt by now– this was something, though, that Old Welker did not dare to voice out so he kept it to himself.

“I know that, but you must remember this. If the gold coins are not sufficient, you may take more from Anna. These purchases must not be discontinued. These are my standing orders.” Leylin steepled his fingers. Although he was approximately 15 years old, he could apparently impose his will.

“Al....Alright! I got it.” A layer of cold sweat beaded Old Welker’s forehead. He immediately bowed then left.

He was not the same as Anna and the three men who were aware of Leylin’s identity. It was only natural that he was a little apprehensive about the way Leylin handled financial matters.

However, for Leylin, the only reason he set up a household was to serve his own purposes and to help him with miscellaneous tasks such as the collection of ingredients. So the loss of some gold coins was no big deal.

Anything and everything was to pave the way for his progress to become a Magus. Everything else was a nuisance.

“Although I have walked on the path of a Magus, it is just to obtain freedom and a worry-free life. It is a pity, though, that my current strength is far from enough.”

Leylin sighed deeply. He appeared to have become a person of consequence within Extreme Night City, largely owing to his having a villa and servants. However, for Magi, such things were illusory soap bubbles that could completely vanish with a gentle tap.

The collateral damage of a battle between any two official Magi would definitely be a deadly situation for the current Leylin.

What was the point of fleeting comfort when life or death was not entirely guaranteed?

“More importantly, if the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was totally defeated, then Sage Gotham’s Hut would perhaps classify all of the faculty and students of the academy as fugitives. I would have to abandon everything and flee.”

“In this chaotic era, only one’s own strength can ensure freedom.”

Chapter 61: Brey Canyon

After Old Welker left, only Leylin and Fraser remained in the room.

The Knight knew of Leylin's status as a magician, so Leylin's attitude was a little more lax too.

Half lying on the recliner, Leylin's eyes squinted, "What is the update on the withering woods?"

Fraser lowered his head to signify his respect, as he said, "Respected Young Master, according to your orders, I sent many scouts out to reconnoiter the withering woods. At the price of 1 dead and 2 seriously injured, I finally uncovered some clues."

Recent events at the withering woods had led to a direct decrease in herb harvesting. As of this moment, several huge factions had also sent scouts with the same intent. But even after having sent many scouts, they were all ambushed.

According to a few eyewitnesses, they had suffered from some ridiculous attacks from a black entity within the woods. So far, it was only known that that entity was an extremely swift monster. Apart from that description, nothing else was known.

"Go on." Leylin's voice was extremely calm.

"One bandit was finally able to see clearly what that monster

looked like, during one of its ambushes. This is the sketch he drew.”

The Knight handed over a sketch to Leylin.

Leylin took a look. On the sketch paper was a kind of four-legged, snake-like creature. Its body was littered with scales, it had a forked tongue, and on its crown was a small horn.

“What else did the bandit say?” Leylin asked.

“He said that this creature was about two metres in length. Its whole body was a yellowish-brown and it was extremely fast.” Fraser added.

“It had such an appearance?” Leylin said as hurriedly recalled an illustrated handbook of unusual creatures he had seen back at the academy, “It’s rather similar to the Blue Lizard, but the colour is not right. It also appears to be similar to a snake-type!”

“However, the fact that a few scouts were able to escape shows that this creature is not very dangerous. A Level 2 Acolyte should be able to deal with it.” Leylin calmed down.

At the moment, though, he still did not have any intention of settling this personally. Apart from the potion experiments entering a crucial stage, the withering woods event had not been investigated fully. Unless it was absolutely necessary, Leylin would not risk his life for unknown dangers.

“Pass these orders down. No matter who, as long as they can capture or slay this creature, I will reward them with 2000 gold pieces! Also, any materials from the creature, be it scales, blood, skin or horn, I will give an additional 200 gold pieces for them.”

Leylin said blandly.

“Yes, Milord, allow me to issue these mission orders.” Fraser bowed.

“Go.” Leylin waved his hands. Fraser bowed again before striding off.

Three days later, east of Extreme Night City, in a small canyon.

Leylin wore black robes and walked on the mountainous path along the canyon. Against a person like him with all of the stats above 3, these obstructions were not an issue at all. He trotted on as if taking a leisurely walk in his backyard.

Behind him followed an armoured Greem, who also wore a mask with his helmet to conceal his appearance.

“We’re here! Brey Canyon Market!” Leylin said softly as he felt the energy waves fluctuating in the vicinity.

This market was on the map that Bicky had given to Leylin. It was situated close to Extreme Night City and served as a resource exchange point. Previously when Leylin chose the mission, part of his intent was to visit this market.

“Halt!” A girl’s voice rang. Leylin turned towards the direction of the voice. He discovered a little girl, riding a mountain goat, moving towards them.

The mountain goat’s four hooves skipped and hopped along the cliff. It actually moved very quickly, reaching Leylin’s side in a few moments.

“You are a magician?” The little girl sized up Leylin and asked indifferently.

“Yes, I am a wandering magician. I wish to enter the market. This is my servant!” Leylin pointed to Greem behind him.

“This servant’s strength has already reached that of a Knight’s? You’re strong!” The little girl gave a thumbs up, “The fee is 1 Magic Crystal each for you and your servant. If you think that’s expensive then he can wait outside.”

“No need for that!” Leylin took out 2 Magic Crystals and handed it over to the girl.

“I wish to know where in this canyon I can obtain the latest information!” Leylin asked casually.

“You’re new here, aren’t you? In here, I have the most updated news!” The little girl smugly tilted her head up and her face had an expression that said, “You may beg me for it.”

Leylin was rather speechless. From the A.I. Chip’s scan, this little girl was a Level 3 Acolyte. Her strength was actually higher than Murphy’s. She was definitely no longer a youth, appearances aside. It was hard to figure out why she maintained the countenance of a child.

“Could this respected guardian tell me what the price would be in order to obtain some news?” Leylin bowed slightly.

“You are rather pleasing to my eyes, so 1 news item in return for 1 Magic Crystal!” The little girl put on an expression that looked as if she thought highly of Leylin.

“Alright then!” Leylin smiled wryly and handed over a Magic Crystal.

“What is the progress of the war at Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?”

“Recently, magicians who bought news from me have also enquired about this.” The little girl scratched her head, “According to the latest updates from yesterday, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy still persists due to their reliance on their magic spell formation. Acolyte fatalities have not been low, however.

Upon saying this, the little girl murmured, “Calm down! Calm down! The war’s conflagration will not extend to here. There aren’t even that many reliable resource points in this place, so how can it attract the attention of the academies. Only acolytes might come here occasionally.”

“I know that. Then do you know the reason for this war?” Leylin handed yet another Magic Crystal.

The little girl hurriedly took it, “Who knows? It seemed to be for a sceptre or some jewel....”

“So it’s like this!” Leylin nodded his head, indicating he had nothing more to ask.

“Young man, I hope you find what you need in this canyon, without any problems!” The little girl waved her hands and patted the goat she rode. It resumed its hopping, and very soon they disappeared from his sight and into the canyon.

“Let us also go in!” Leylin said to Greem behind him.

Coming to the canyon this time, Leylin was on an extremely tight schedule. A number of his experiments have reached a crucial stage. The modified Azure Potion formula was also nearing completion.

It was a pity that some of the magic ingredients he stockpiled

before had been depleted. He, thus, had no choice but to venture from his home.

“Soon! I only need to complete the supplementary ingredients, and then begin to try brewing the Azure Potion. By then my Spiritual Force, which has been slowly increasing, will receive a huge boost!” Leylin eyes seemed to glow with fire.

Following the narrow route along the precipice, Leylin carefully entered the depths of the ravine. In this resource exchange point, the stores were all set up within the holes that dotted the cliff, a little like the caves of primitive men.

Leylin walked into a potions shop called “Langford’s Potions”. The cave was extremely dark, only a few rocks radiating green light illuminated it.

These rocks seemingly made every item inside the cave emanate a green glow making the scene look extremely gloomy.

“Hehehe! What do you want?” A dark and sorrowful laughter could be heard.

From behind the counter, an old dwarf walked out. His face was full of wrinkles, was bald and most of his teeth had fallen off too.

“I require 20 standard servings each of Tendril Leaves, Water Crystal Fruits and Dragon-Eyed Grapeseed!”

Leylin enunciated slowly.

“Oh!” The old dwarf stood rooted to the floor not moving, “These are all potion ingredients and their prices will not be ordinary! Are you a Potioneering Master?”

“That does not seem to concern you in any way.” Leylin’s brows furrowed, this old geezer’s attitude made him rather displeased.

“Young man! Could it be that no one taught you to respect the elderly?” The dwarf geezer smiled and the pupils of his eyes seemed to swirl continuously.

[Warning! Warning! The target’s body is radiating magical energy waves!]

The A.I. Chip’s alert sounded.

Greem who was behind Leylin fell without making a sound.

“Damn it!” Leylin cursed. A few acolytes and even official Magi, because of getting injured while advancing or due to being contaminated by radiation from experimenting, caused them to become mentally unstable. They often exhibited craziness. Obviously, Leylin met one such today.

According to the A.I. Chip’s scan, the dwarf opposite him was a

Level 2 Acolyte, but his Spiritual Force was much higher than Leylin's.

The magical power in Leylin's body circulated, allowing him to escape from the old geezer's spell, "An Illusionary spell? Doesn't seem like it! It should be some passive spell if it's like this!"

Leylin's robes shook, and a fire red potion was now in his hands. His whole body let off a very dangerous feeling.

"Hahaha...Just like this! Just like this! Death is beautiful, and is descending upon us soon!" The dwarf geezer laughed manically and danced in joy.

"This person has gone completely crazy!" Leylin got ready to throw the explosive potion in his hands, and to find an escape route.

He did not want to engage in a broil with a madman without cause nor reason. Besides, winning will not net him any gains.

"That's enough, Langford!" Just when the dwarf geezer was preparing another spell, a voice travelled over. It was the guardian, the voice of the little girl who rode the mountain goat.

"Marissa! I've had enough of you!" The dwarf geezer howled loudly, and he made an incantation. Black coloured smoke congealed in his hands forming a massive black ball.

The surrounding shelves that held various ingredients were on the verge of collapse under the energy waves emitted by the black ball.

“Damn it! Langford’s time is here again. Which one of you can help me?” The little girl’s voice travelled over again, this time sounding rather exasperated.

“Foos!” “Ocker!”

Two extremely short incantations travelled over and gave Leylin a shock, “They’re all Level 3 Acolytes! I heard that not only can the Spiritual Force of Level 3 Acolytes support a few Rank 0 spells, they have also grasped the technique of phrase casting, which shortens incantations to a few syllables achieving near instantaneous casting.”

After the few syllables were cast, many green vines appeared within the cave. Some of the huge vines held Langford’s hands and feet together.

Langford roared continuously. He prepared to toss the black-coloured smoke ball out.

At that moment, a red coloured arrow ripped through the air and flew directly at the heart of the ball.

Poof! The surroundings let off a light ring as the black smoke and the red arrow continued to counteract each other before finally

disappearing into nothingness.

“A positive energy arrow.” Leylin’s pupils contracted, “The Level 3 Acolyte who struck from the outside, no matter their battle ability or spell comprehension, they have far surpassed me!”

Chapter 62: Modified Potion

“What are you guys doing? Put me down quickly!”

At this moment, Langford, who was trapped, transformed rapidly.

The maniacal look on his face vanished, and his eyes showed sanity. The originally bald head had grown a large amount of green hair that quickly extended to his ankles.

“Look his hair is already growing, it seems like he has regained his sanity!” The little girl’s voice rang out and the green vines were retracted.

“Langford! You actually did not master anticipating when your episodes of insanity would trigger. You even broke the rules of the canyon by startling our customer! You better obtain our guest’s forgiveness. Otherwise, you will be chased out of this place!”

Two voices gradually left, and Leylin did not see the other two Level 3 Acolytes, even after the battle had ended. Moreover, even the interior of the cave remained unharmed.

Upon noticing that something was amiss, the dwarf hurriedly bowed before Leylin, “My apologies, Sir! Due to some mental strain, there are times when I’m unable to control myself. I hope you will allow me to make amends for the inconvenience I caused.”

Langford was a little dispirited, “Earlier I really thought I had the timing down. Alas, I never anticipated that it would flare up more often than before, who knows if I really have to move out....”

Leylin too did not know how to react in this situation. He could only say, “Then please wake my servant up. Also, hurry and bring the ingredients I requested!”

“Of course!” The dwarf geezer dragged his long shaggy hair and stood in front of Greem. He lifted Greem’s eyelid to have a look, “Your servant has only fainted temporarily. He will recover after a short rest!”

He then took some brown coloured powder from his robes and made Greem swallow them. Not long after, the burly fellow woke up.

Langford then brought out a small box and handed it to Leylin, “To compensate for your trouble. Furthermore, I can give you a 50% discount!”

“...” Leylin was a little speechless, but he still handed the Magic Crystals to the geezer and gave the box to Greem for him to carry before he bade farewell.

As they said their goodbyes, Langford bowed deeply again, “If you still wish to trade with me, please remember, only when my hair has grown past my ankle, will I be in a period of sanity. The rest of the time, avoid me for the time being.

Leylin nodded his head and left the canyon with Greem.

Originally, he was in a mood to browse around. However, after this incident, he had completely lost interest. Who knew if there were other crazy people in this canyon.

The path of a Magus is treacherous, each failure in advancement—be it through an experiment or as a side effect of spell radiation—can cause irreversible damage to those involved, even costing them their lives sometimes.

Adding prolonged longevity and immense power, over time a Magus' character would undergo some kind of change; some may even develop mental problems.

Leylin thought of Langford and the two Level 3 Acolytes who had rendered their assistance. The feeling they gave Leylin was completely different from that of the acolytes of Extreme Night City.

To put things in perspective, it was like a pack of wolves against lambs.

“It seems like real magicians very seldom prefer to stay around humans, and they predominantly stay in rural areas.

Seeing the might of those two Level 3 Acolytes today made Leylin somewhat more zealous, “Once I have successfully brewed the Azure Potion, I too can quickly advance to that level!”

In the lab, under the brilliant light, Leylin took and stared at a test tube from the table. It continuously bubbled with blue froth.

With extremely firm hands, he shook it according to a mysterious rhythm.

The blue bubbles in the test tube continued to froth upwards then vanish as it reached the brim.

[The reaction in the potion has become extremely stable, and is estimated to exceed the threshold in 3 Minutes 24 Seconds!]

The A.I. Chip's observation alerted.

After reporting this condition, a timer at a bottom corner of Leylin's visual field started the countdown.

When the countdown reached 0, Leylin immediately used the ancient Byron language and muttered an incantation, "This is the azure blue ocean, come! My little babies!"

His other hand immediately dropped some of the blue crystals he was holding, into the test tube.

Weng Weng! The test tube started to tremble.

A few streaks of a brilliant blue light flew out of its mouth and rotated around it turning into little blue coloured mermaids.

These little mermaids had a girl's torso and were only the size of Leylin's thumb. On their chests hung two shell pieces while the bottom half of their body was that of a fish's tail. At this moment, they were holding hands together, circling the test tube, singing and dancing.

Their sweet distinct elegant voices sang and it reverberated within the room strumming on Leylin's heartstrings.

"The final step! Resist the alluring voices of the mermaids!" Leylin's expression tightened.

Rumours had it that the singing voices of mermaids not only have terrifying bewitching energy, but these voices were also used to prey on sailors in the deep seas. Many suspected these mermaids as main culprits behind the creation of ghost ships!

Right now, Leylin felt a strong impulse to throw everything he owned to the side, and dive straight into the ocean.

"This is only an illusion. It only has the 10% of an actual mermaid's might. If these were real or were cast by mermaid Magi, what would the effects be?" Leylin clenched his teeth and gave off a layer of grey-black light from his body deflecting these voices.

“Manse!” After waiting for roughly 30 seconds, Leylin suddenly blurted out a word.

Chi Chi! Black coloured needles appeared piercing through the chests of those little mermaids.

Agonised expressions could be seen on the pretty faces of the mermaids. Suddenly, they dissolved and turned into a few drops of blue liquid that returned into the test tube.

Huge amounts of bubbles, crystals and the drops of liquid rapidly merged and at that instant turned into a test tube half filled with a dark blue potion.

* Crash! Leylin shook the test tube lightly. From within the test tube came the crashing sound like that of great surging waves in an ocean.

[The modified Azure Potion has been brewed successfully.]

The A.I. Chip indicated.

“A.I. Chip, how potent is this potion compared to the original formulation?” Leylin asked.

[Beep! Collecting the vapours. Analysing and comparing data... Estimated to have 33% of the original potion's effect.]

Although the previous estimate was 35.4%, there would be some minute differences during the actual brewing. Furthermore, it was the first time he did this experiment, so achieving this effect made Leylin very content.

“A pity that the consumptions of Hove Violet Leaves for this process is too high!” Leylin looked at the remnants of the Hove Violet Leaves lying on the side.

Only the essence from the middle of a whole piece of Hove Violet Leaf could be used for the potion. Apart from that, many complicated steps also had to be accomplished resulting in the high consumption rate.

He estimated that even after Welker bought all of the ingredients available, it would only allow Leylin to brew the potion another 30 to 40 times.

“Now, I wonder what the effects of this ancient potion are?”

Leylin's eyes flashed in anticipation. He directly walked to an empty space and sat cross-legged on the floor. He then poured the Azure Potion into his mouth.

“It's a little bitter, and has a rather fish-like odour.” The muscles

on Leylin's face twitched, "The palate of these ancient Magi was just so-so...."

"According to the A.I. Chip's calculations, the best complement to potions that increase Spiritual Force is meditation!"

Leylin thought of this before completely entering into a meditative mode.

This time, the meditations effect was very obviously different from before. With a vague concept of time, Leylin felt like he was in the middle of an azure blue ocean and boundless blue sea water squeezed his middle almost suffocating him.

When seen from the outside, the muscles on Leylin's handsome face twitched, and drops of sweat continuously dripped out.

Almost two hours later, Leylin abruptly opened both of his eyes.

"Phew! The feeling from meditating like this is several times more uncomfortable than before!" Leylin shook his head.

The meditation of an acolyte, more often than not, led to exhaustion afterwards. However, right now Leylin felt his whole body aching, especially his brain, which felt like someone took a large metal hammer and kept smashing it. Even now he was somewhat dizzy.

"A.I. Chip. Display my stats." Leylin ordered.

Immediately, a blue screen appeared before Leylin and showed a stream of numbers.

[The Host's Spiritual Force has been detected as undergoing a rapid rise!]

[Host is under the influence of an unknown, Spiritual Force increasing by 0.01]

[Spiritual Force increasing by 0.01]

[The meditative state is deepening. Effect optimised. Spiritual Force increasing by 0.03]

[Spiritual Force has reached the threshold, increasing by 0.05]

.....

[Meditative state ended, Host's stats undergoing change. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 3.3, Vitality: 3.2, Spiritual Force: 4.9, Magical Power: 4.0. Status: Healthy]

Rows of data were displayed, and Leylin discovered at the end that his Spiritual Force had increased by 0.2.

“This figure!” Leylin’s eyes widened, “If the original ingredients were used, doesn’t that mean that I can increase Spiritual Force by about 0.7 at a time! It is indeed worthy to be called an ancient potion. Even for official Magi, this is a pretty good outcome!”

“A.I. Chip, assuming there are enough potions on hand, how much time will I need to reach 7 Spiritual Force points?” Leylin asked.

[Inputting effect of Azure Potion, establishing simulation, factoring tolerance principle, calculation in progress....]

The A.I. Chip began calculating, dozens of seconds later, the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

[According to the Host’s resistance to medicinal properties, it is estimated that the Host will achieve 7 Spiritual Force points after two months!]

The necessary conditions to advance to Level 3 Acolyte was to have mastery over at least 2 spell models, a Spiritual Force of 7 and to use a reactive elixir.

Leylin had gotten the spell models and reactive elixirs long ago. What kept him back was this Spiritual Force bottleneck.

“A pity, though! The success rate for brewing the Azure Potion is extremely horrifying. Even if it’s me, I will at most succeed one out of ten times!”

“Hove Violet Leaves. I need huge amounts of Hove Violet Leaves. If it cannot be done, I must organise a trading party to acquire them from other cities.”

Leylin clenched his teeth. His eyes revealed obvious desire.

“Young Master!” As he walked out from the lab, Anna, who was waiting outside, greeted him immediately.

“Pass these orders down. From now on, our establishment will cease all operations and devote all resources towards purchasing Hove Violet Leaves. Moreover, Fraser is to make a trip to nearby cities to acquire them!” Leylin’s expression was extremely grim.

“Yes!” This was the first time Anna had seen this side of Leylin, so she hurriedly retreated.

Chapter 63: Mutated Organism

The bitter cold of winter passed, and the weather began to get warmer.

Standing on the villa, Leylin could already see the minuscule green dots from afar. On nearby fields, there were even farmers laboriously working.

“A year has passed unknowingly; I am already 15 years old now!” Leylin’s hands pressed on the windowsill, and his eyes seemed to be disconcerted.

All of the Hove Violet Leaves available in Extreme Night City had been bought by him. With continuous brewing, he managed to get 5 Azure Potions, bringing his Spiritual Force to 5.8.

Unfortunately, any potion, when used excessively, would produce a resistance towards it, and the effects would be reduced over time. Originally, he had estimated that his Spiritual Force would reach a value of 5.9 with the resources available. However, in reality, it fell short by 0.1 without any apparent cause.

“Right now, I can only place my hopes on Fraser and the rest who have gone to neighbouring cities to purchase the ingredient.”

Leylin rested by the windowsill. He stretched his hands and plucked a bunch of red berries from the table munching on them as snacks.

“Compared to other acolytes, however, my progress is akin to flying. After all, even the heir of a large family cannot use potions endlessly. What’s more, these are precious potions that could increase Spiritual Force.”

Within a month, Leylin already chased up to the fifth-grade acolytes who had pulled away from him over a year ago.

“It’s fortunate that I’m outside the academy. Only then am I able to pursue my experiments without fearing of the consequences, and use potions such as these!” Leylin was suddenly rejoicing over the benefits that the war brought him.

“However, even if the war ends now, I wouldn’t dare go back. I must, at least, wait until the 3 years mission duration is up. Only then will my excuse be plausible.

At that moment, Leylin estimated that he would already be a Level 3 Acolyte. Apart from the professors, he would be considered to have power, and would be regarded as a more important member. Moreover, with these years as cover, he would have enough time to think up a few explanations to cover his tracks.

“Master! An emissary from the City Lord has arrived with an invitation.” Anna knocked on the door, entering only after getting Leylin’s permission.

Because of some Magus’ doings, her face looked as youthful as ever, never changing.

“An invitation?” Leylin was a little skeptical. He did not have many relations with Viscount Jackson all this while.

After looking the missive over, “A gathering? On the invitation, it was specifically stated that Murphy and his circle of people were invited, which are all acolytes!”

Leylin surmised, “Could it be? Some mysterious thing has happened that requires the help of magicians?”

“Anna, prepare a horse carriage and a set of formal clothes for me. I have to leave for a while.”

Leylin said this without giving it another thought. Towards the Grand Knight, Viscount Jackson, who was also the Lord of Extreme Night City, it was difficult for an acolyte to interfere with his might. Therefore, Leylin did not want to be on bad terms with him.

Moreover, due to the decreased supply of Hove Violet Leaves recently, Leylin did not have any other important things to do, so he could make time for this gathering.

“I’ll have a look, and I haven’t seen Murphy for some time now!”

In the heart of Extreme Night City, the castle-like building which was built using grey rocks was extremely magnificent. There were many soldiers patrolling the area, revealing its prestige.

Ta-Ta! A black horse carriage suddenly halted in front of the City Lord's castle. The carriage door opened, and a brown-haired noble youth stepped down from it. He looked rather thin, but his bright eyes were filled with vigour.

At that same instant, another horse carriage, made of reddish brown wood, halted alongside it too. From it stepped out a white bearded geezer who was carrying a book. He radiated a scholarly aura.

After seeing Leylin, every wrinkle on the old geezer's face loosened as he smiled. He took the initiative and spread his arms out, "It's been a long time, my friend!"

"I'm very pleased to meet you, Scholar Murphy!" Leylin smiled as he gently hugged the old man.

His relationship with Murphy was pretty good. Although this old geezer had a few demerits, but it was undeniable that some of his experiences were a source of great enlightenment for Leylin. When Leylin had first arrived in Extreme Night City, Murphy had also given much help to Leylin.

Both of them conversed casually. They flashed their invitation cards at the same time as they went past the guarded entrance.

A person, rather like a butler, led Leylin and Murphy through the garden and brought them to a small-sized living room.

Several acolyte residents were already there and Leylin went forward to greet them.

There was a circular sofa in the middle of the living room, with a mahogany table at its centre. It seemed to suggest equality between status and levels.

“Welcome, my friends!”

The tough looking Viscount Jackson entered. He looked the same, to Leylin, as he looked a year ago. Time did not seem to have caused any changes in him, apart from a few more strands of hair white behind his ears that is.

“City Lord!” The acolytes all nodded their heads.

“Come, no need for formalities! Sit!” Viscount Jackson casually sat on the sofa and serving maids that wore low cut blouses served some red tea as refreshments, with matching flavoured cake and biscuit snacks.

“Why does the atmosphere seem to be like a conference and afternoon tea?” Although he had his doubts, Leylin never revealed anything.

Viscount Jackson and the acolytes sat in a circle, and, from time to time, they discussed the latest news. On the whole, the atmosphere felt extremely amiable.

“A pity, Viscount Jackson is known to be a cold-blooded person. I heard that to suppress a riot, he immediately ordered the execution of a whole village, even hanging all its resident’s heads on wooden stakes....”

Leylin still put on a friendly mannerism, but deep down he exclaimed, “As expected, to interact harmoniously, one must first have the prerequisite of equal power!”

“Yes, speaking of Baron Fey, he has recently been distressed about the issues of the medicine shop!” Viscount Jackson inadvertently spoke of this while chatting idly.

“We have also heard of the withering woods of Dark Night Woods for some time now. Only that we have not arrived at any solution yet!” An acolyte sitting at the side spoke, playing at being a character interested in delving deeper into this topic.

Murphy’s brows furrowed, “I believe that my lord Viscount will definitely have a solution, right?”

However, Viscount Jackson smiled wryly, “My friends! I have already used ravens to inform the royal family, but up to now I have not received any reply....I am completely at a loss about what to do in this situation!”

“Royal family?” Leylin’s heart thumped, the royal family behind the Poolfield Kingdom was supported by Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. The relationship between the two parties was extremely

intricate. This mission appearing in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was finally no longer strange anymore.

Speaking of which, he was even the representative sent by Abyssal Bone Forest Academy to remedy this problem, but he had been lackadaisical about it. He had finally forced Viscount Jackson to have no solution but to request help from this group of acolytes.

Although deep within he smiled cynically, on the surface Leylin still put on the same front. He picked up the cup of hot tea and sipped, without any intention of owning up.

“Is it only a high levelled creature that had mutated? Could it be that Sire cannot even resolve this?” A red-haired, middle-aged man asked.

Leylin recognised this person; he had opened an apparel store in Extreme Night City and many clothes in his villa had been purchased from there.

The city’s residents knew that the owner of this clothing store was a friendly, middle-aged man, who even has a beautiful daughter. But they never knew that he was a magician.

“Truth be told, I have already struck against it once before! I have even killed a lizard type creature, but it was of no help towards this withering woods case!”

Viscount Jackson flicked his hand.

“Right now, the withering woods area has expanded to a span of about two villages. If not resolved, sooner or later, it will encompass the whole of Dark Night Woods. When that happens, obtaining another herb from it would be only a dream!”

Viscount Jackson clenched his fists.

The herb industry was the pillar of Extreme Night City's economy. Every year the City Lord's castle gained a lot from the high taxes it imposed on these trades. Right now its tax income had been drastically reduced. It was no wonder that Viscount Jackson was unable to sit still.

“Could you let us have a look at the composition of some of that lizard's body parts?” Murphy asked.

“Yes!” Viscount Jackson clapped his hands, and a golden yellow-haired maid brought forward a silver tray. Displayed on it were some brown-yellow scales.

The surrounding acolytes all picked up a piece; Leylin too placed one in his hands.

“A.I. Chip! Scan!” The brown yellow scales were the size of a thumb, cold to the touch.

[Suspected to be the scale of a mutated creature, estimated to

be a mutation of a lizard type in the Poolfield Kingdom! The surface emits mild radiation, the quality is a mess, extractable materials have been destroyed, useless as component material!]

The A.I. Chip relayed the information after the scanning.

“No wonder the magicians in the canyon did not react! There was simply no use of this creature’s body parts to magicians. It’s the whole body is not even worth a Magic Crystal. Who would do such a strenuous yet unrewarding task!”

Leylin was somewhat enlightened. To Magi, benefits were paramount. They will not do anything that reaped no benefits.

The withering woods case happened on the boundaries of Extreme Night City. If there were any benefits or some magician who liked the creatures material, it would have long been resolved by the acolytes at the resource point in the ravine.

Their letting this current state of affairs continues only meant one thing: there were no benefits at all from solving the withering woods debacle, only trouble. If there were any benefits, they were too small to cover the potential losses a venture would incur. This was why it had not been resolved after all this while.

“What a pity! It is not a high-level creature that magicians need, just a mutated organism, which has no use to them!” Murphy said after picking up a magnifying glass like object and scrutinising the scale for some time. He reached the same conclusion as Leylin.

“How is that? Any solutions?” Viscount Jackson put on a hopeful expression and looked at his guests.

“Most mutated organisms were caused by long-term exposure from its surroundings. Without further detail and research, I cannot make arrive at any conclusion from just this! Moreover, I don’t think that this creature is the main culprit for the withering woods.”

Murphy shook his head.

“I am willing to give 30 Magic Crystals to every person, in addition to 5000 gold coins to ask you guys to scout the area. How about that? This is my request, on account of us being old friends!’

Viscount Jackson looked the people in the circle and saw that the other acolytes too lacked interest. He could not help but clench his teeth as he stated this.

“Since it is troublesome for my lord Viscount, I definitely will not refuse!”

Murphy said somewhat grudgingly.

Chapter 64: Withering Woods

Pressured by Viscount Jackson's aggressive request, very soon the other acolytes agreed too.

After all, they had been in his territory for so long, and he was also a Grand Knight, so it would be awkward if they were to decline.

However there was an exception, the acolyte with acne, whom Leylin saw before, refused without hesitation.

Finally, the Viscount's gaze focused on Leylin, "How about you, Mister Leylin?"

Viscount Jackson had some reservation towards Leylin. This was because the timing of Leylin's arrival was a coincidence which made him guess that this acolyte was the emissary who had accepted the royal family's mission.

It was a pity that ever since Leylin had arrived, he had spent most of his time in the manor, and rarely left the place. Neither were there any magicians who came forward seeking revenge on him, so it seemed like this acolyte was truly a reclusive.

If it were not for the fact that Leylin gave orders so a mission to the withering woods would go forth, Viscount Jackson would have been utterly disappointed.

“After all, it has to be done, and going in as a party is better!”

Leylin thought deep down, yet on the surface he appeared extremely hesitant, “Recently I have been researching potions, and am extremely busy. Some of my experiments have reached a crucial stage....”

“Still, I beseech Mister Leylin to take time out for this!” Viscount Jackson said suddenly, “I know that you have been buying Hove Violet Leaves en masse recently. This ingredient is rather rare, and other cities as well do not have too much of this in their reserves. However, our castle has a storehouse. If Mister Leylin agrees to go on this scouting trip, I am willing to add those in our reserves as a reward!”

“Hove Violet Leaves?” Leylin eyes flashed; this was an unexpected surprise. He estimated this offer to be Viscount Jackson’s threshold. Leylin appeared to ‘struggle’ on the surface, before finally agreeing.

Afterwards, the acolytes made plans for a concrete time to meet, before leaving hurriedly to make preparations.

For this bunch of acolytes, who wholeheartedly wanted to retire and live like princes, Leylin did not put much stock in their actual battle prowess.

“However, when all is said and done, they are still acolytes. Their basic spells, once cast, should still be something.” Leylin consoled himself.

At this moment, Murphy who just bade the others farewell walked beside Leylin with a frown on his expression, “Young man, when we reach the withering woods you have to protect me.”

“Sire! You are Level 3! A Level 3 Acolyte! While I am but a Level 2 Acolyte!” Leylin eyes widened.

“Sigh...I’m already too old for this. I have forgotten much of my spell repertoire. You understand, forming the spell model is meticulous work, a small miss-step and the explosion will not even leave behind corpse!” Murphy had a helpless expression.

“You, how long has it been since you last cast a spell?” Leylin suddenly had a bad premonition.

“It seems almost 30 to 40 years! As you know, I have always regarded myself as a scholar!” Murphy said very innocently.

“Fuck!” Leylin felt rather regretful suddenly.

Two days later. In the morning, Extreme Night City’s gates opened. Through those gates came a squadron of soldiers escorting a party in the middle. The group left the city’s perimeter at a rapid pace.

“I never thought that Viscount Jackson would also set off with us!” Murphy seemed to be very happy. Having a Grand Knight around, left him greatly assured.

Riding beside him, Viscount Jackson wore black-coloured, steel armour with a helmet that covered his entire face.

“How are your preparations?” Leylin found a suitable time and whispered into Murphy’s ears.

“I have concentrated these past 2 days, and can barely use two spell models,” Murphy replied softly.

“That’s good!” Their conversation before was of a joking nature. Leylin would never believe that this crafty old geezer did not have any life-preserving trump cards up his sleeves.

The Magus world is not a peaceful place. Without enough skills, Murphy would have long since died. So how could he have survived until now as a mere scholar?

“However, even the Black Iron Guards have been activated? There seem to be two small squadrons, about 20 men!”

“Of course, these are all elite troops of the city!” Murphy said. Actually, both he and Leylin knew that in the withering woods, those two squadrons served only one purpose. Cannon fodder!

Dark Night Woods wasn’t that far from the city. After travelling for about half an hour, the group managed to reach the wood’s outskirts.

“The danger level here is comparable to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, despite its smaller size. At least, if a normal human were to be more alert, they can enter and leave here as they please when gathering the herbs!”

Leylin was at the centre of the party. Seeing the two squadrons paving the way at the front, his mind wandered.

Along the way, Leylin felt the life force of the Dark Night Woods reducing. Although it was spring, the woods seemed to lack vitality.

Moreover, everyone felt that their bodies were getting heavier and there was a shadow that veiled over their hearts. It felt extremely repressing.

Leylin looked around. The roots of the tree showed signs of withering. Some of the fresh sprouts have even turned pale yellow.

“The withering area has not extended to this point, but this is just a hypothesis!” Leylin gasped.

“It is indeed different here now! My family used to be hunters. In past years, there used to be animals prancing about in this area. There were many wild vegetables and fresh herbs....”

Leylin overheard the words a few soldiers whispered among themselves.

“A.I. Chip! Any change in the air around here?”

[Scanning. Comparing with the database! Conclusion: Oxygen density/levels decreased by 3.7%, Nitrogen density increased. An unknown noble gas has appeared. It currently accounts for 1.2% but its density continues to rise!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“Could this inert noble gas be the perpetrator of this withering woods event?” Leylin stroked his chin, allowing the A.I. Chip to continue.

“Be careful! We have entered the withering domain!” Viscount Jackson roared at the forefront of the group.

Leylin patted his leather armour. Beneath it was the grey robes of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acting as a second layer of defense. He had even purposely removed the academy’s insignia earlier.

What the accompanying acolytes lacked were the ephemeral defensive constructs that the Magi layered around themselves as they went into battle. Victory often revolved solely on whether the spells cast managed to strike an opponent.

“Instantaneous spell casting, Potioneering Spells, Magic Artifacts were all great enhancers of an acolyte’s battle strength!”

Leylin reached into his robes and took out a potion from a leather bag tied around the waist.

In Brey Canyon, he had replenished his ingredients and had made many explosive potions as his ammunition for this expedition.

As the group advanced, the environment began to change.

More and more dried withered plants and trees filled the woods. They let off an aura of death and decay.

Leylin reached out and grabbed a twig in passing. His eyes flashed, “It has already lost all its water content, and even....”

Exerting a little more force in his palm, the twig immediately turned into white dust, trickled through the gaps in his fingers and floated down towards the ground.

“Even the internal structure has been completely destroyed!” Leylin’s heart felt rather heavy. A power like this already exceeded his expectations.

“Where are we supposed to go?” Viscount Jackson asked Murphy who was beside him.

“The heart of the woods! Only by reaching the center of this

withering region, can my spell exert enough effect!” Murphy had on an extremely solemn expression. He withdrew a spectacle-like item and hung it on his nose.

A wide withered tree lay on the ground. It had an extremely spongy feel when stepped on.

[Warning! Warning! Dangerous organism ahead!]

The A.I. Chip’s alarm went off suddenly and Leylin tried to think of an excuse to use so he could warn the others.

Hu! Suddenly brown-coloured branches and twigs flew up. A black figure came charging towards them.

This figure was extremely quick. It opened its jaw littered with snow white fangs. A red-coloured tongue flicked out.

Su Su! The tongue coiled around one of the guards on duty at the front and retracted its tongue. Pa! The guard’s spear fell.

“Be careful!” At this moment, Viscount Jackson gave a warning.

“Argh!” The miserable cries sounded. The guard, trapped in the tongue’s coils had already disappeared into a black hole. He was snapped into two halves. Fresh red blood and guts spilled onto the ground.

“Damn it!” Viscount Jackson shouted angrily and brandished the wide sword that hung from his waist. He immediately went and engaged the black figure.

“Sluggish Spell!” The red-haired shop owner waved his hands. A yellow-green light was shot. It turned into a circular ring that closed on the black figure. The other acolytes began reacting and started their own incantations.

Sssii! With the hissing of the creature, the black figure’s speed finally slowed down revealing its appearance to everyone.

Its body was clay-yellow in colour. It had four legs, a tongue that was like a snake’s and a small horn on its forehead.

“Wasn’t it reported that this creature died already? Why is there still one?” Leylin was suspicious, but he still activated the A.I. Chip.

[Beep! Unknown organism. Strength: 5.5, Agility: 4 (6-7), Vitality: 5, Spiritual Force: 3. Similarity to Blue Lizard 67.4% and to Mance Earth Snake 45.8%]

“It’s a rather strong creature. Apart from its low Spiritual Force, it doesn’t have any obvious flaws. Their numbers are also unknown; no wonder Jackson was not able to deal with them alone!”

However, as the Sluggish Spell took effect, this strange lizard's speed obviously took a hit. After a brief exchange of blows, the Viscount shouted, "Death Arc of Light!"

From within his blade, a resplendent circle of light expanded into the shape of a blade. It streaked past the lizard's neck.

"A Knight-class killing technique! It has the same properties as my Cross Slash. However, Jackson uses it with ease. He has not even used any Knight secret technique."

Bang! The two passed each other. The huge lizard charged forward another few steps before suddenly crashing to the ground.

Sssii! Clay yellow scales landed on the floor one by one. Around the lizard's neck area was a huge cut. Dark red blood spilled on the ground.

"All of you look!" An acolyte shouted suddenly.

With the death of the lizard, its body continued to cave inwards, with the scales continuously falling off and littering the ground. The blood quickly evaporated too. Within a few short minutes, there was only a white skeleton and some yellow scales left on the ground.

Chapter 65: Deep Underground

“There’s no need to look anymore. The same thing happened when I killed these creatures before.”

Viscount Jackson took out a white handkerchief and wiped his blade clean, before sheathing it into the scabbard.

“There’s actually a self-disintegration phenomenon when it dies!”

Leylin was somewhat surprised. This did not correspond to the laws of nature.

Looking at the skeleton that was still emitting white smoke, Leylin picked one of the bones up.

The dried white bone was littered with cracks. It felt like any slight press would cause it to crumble. Leylin exerted a little more force, and with a hissing sound, the dried bone turned into fine powder.

“En, something’s off!” Leylin’s eyes flashed. He discovered some fine threads of veins within the white bone powder.

[Target still exuding vital energy. Identified to be a high-level pathogen. The host is recommended to keep a distance!]

At this moment, the A.I. Chip's scan appeared in Leylin's vision.

Leylin hurriedly flung off the powdery substance and began radiating internal energy particles from within his hands to cleanse them.

"What's wrong?" Murphy too discovered that something was amiss.

"Be careful of those bones, there's something inside it!" Leylin's brows furrowed and he hurriedly distanced himself from it.

Sssii! At that moment, more red blood veins appeared on the desiccated lizard's skeleton. The bone began to exhibit innumerable puncture holes. It seemed like the veins resided within the bones previously.

Countless more blood red veins took shape, intertwining like the branches of a tree and started transforming into a small-sized creature.

It was rather similar to the creature before, but now its body was blood red. From time to time, red veins popped out. The creature did not have eyes or a mouth. Its four legs appeared extremely sturdy, however.

Xiu! The creature's attack was extremely fast. Before Viscount Jackson and the other acolytes could react, it left its original

position. Only a red, blurry line could be seen.

“Give chase! This creature definitely has something to do with the withering woods!” A person covered fully in grey robes whispered something to Viscount Jackson, who immediately gave the order.

“That grey-robed person, has always been following Viscount Jackson ever since we left Extreme Night City. He must be a trusted aide. He also has great detection abilities.”

Leylin eyes narrowed as he used the A.I. Chip to scan. “This appearance and figure, there is also the energy waves of a Level 2 Acolyte? Interesting!”

“Hurry! Keep up!”

Upon hearing Viscount Jackson’s orders, the Black Iron Guards immediately followed suit, overtaking Viscount Jackson and keeping him in their midst. The grey-robed person followed closely behind.

The remaining acolytes looked at each other. Murphy, a little helplessly, said, “Let’s follow them!”

Leylin purposely suppressed his speed and kept to Murphy’s speed, “That thing earlier, do you have any guesses as to what it was?”

“It seems to be some kind of parasite! According to its strength, the mother-parent has, at least, the strength of a Level 3 Acolyte....Or even that of an official Magus!” Murphy smiled bitterly.

Leylin and his small group were of no threat to an official Magus. Any Rank 1 spell could easily obliterate their entire party.

“That shouldn’t be!” Leylin shook his head. According to the A.I. Chip’s calculations, that parasite’s strength was not bad. The mother-parent’s body should at most have the strength of a Level 3 Acolyte, theoretically speaking. Otherwise, Leylin would have been the first to run away.

“It is only.....just an investigative mission, I even picked it myself. That it can actually involve an organism with the strength of a Level 3 Acolyte, how bad can my luck be....” Leylin did not know what to think of himself anymore.

He was happy that he did not come here on his own before. Otherwise, unlike the main characters in the novels of his previous world, he was incapable of those fictional bursts of power in times of adversity. And the only outcome would be death.

“Be careful, we are venturing deeper. I can already feel the dense negative energy aura in the air!”

An acolyte howled.

Leylin had a higher perception towards negative energy. After all, his main affinities were Shadow and Dark Element particles. Just like Plant affinity and Light affinity emphasized on positive energy research, Leylin's affinities made him spend more time exposed to negative energy compared to the others.

“It's almost like the surroundings of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. No wonder I feel like a fish back in the water.”

Leylin pulled up his sleeves and covered the smile that pulled at the corners of his lips.

Clang! Sounded their armour as the group halted.

“It disappeared! I saw that red creature pausing at this spot for a moment, then it suddenly disappeared!” Jackson brandished his long sword, “Be on guard!”

The Black Iron Guards immediately formed a circle protecting Jackson and the acolytes within to prevent any sneak attacks.

“This should be the heart of the withering woods!” Murphy rubbed his nose.

“The scouting method I have prepared can now be used!” Murphy took a black coloured potion from his robes and poured the contents on the ground after opening the plug.

Plop plop!

After the black coloured potion was poured on the forest floor, it actually turned into tiny ants scampering in all directions.

After the potion was used up, Leylin estimated that there were close to ten thousand ants that appeared.

“A scout like this can be considered to have omnidirectional coverage. It will be extremely difficult for that creature to escape!” Leylin thought.

As expected, after roughly a dozen minutes, a black coloured ant appeared at Murphy’s feet, crawled on his robes all the way to his ears, and appeared as if it whispered something.

“It’s been found! Follow me!” Murphy followed the ant and led the group to a withered oak tree.

“Move this oak tree away!” Murphy pointed at the large tree, “According to my probing, there seems to be a secret tunnel underneath it.”

“Squad 1! Go!” Jackson waved his hands.

Several Black Iron Guards went forward and stabbed their pikes at the oak tree.

The withered oak tree did not seem capable of withstanding the

assault. After being pierced multiple times by the pikes, many pieces and chips of bark filled the air as if it were snowing. The ten guards hurriedly moved the completely withered oak tree away revealing a dark sinister tunnel.

“Here it is!” Murphy’s eyes flashed, and he chanted an incantation.

The widely spread black ants returned from all directions and entered the hole.

Suddenly, Murphy’s face turned pale, and his body fell backwards, almost fainting.

“What happened?” Leylin appeared behind Murphy and supported his waist.

“There seems to be an extremely dangerous creature inside. It destroyed all of my precious babies!” Murphy’s expression appeared very unsightly.

“What should we do?” An acolyte asked, apparently wanting to leave.

“Prepare a fire!” Jackson waves his hands, “We’ll have a look down there!”

“Yes!” The guards quickly carried out their lord’s orders. Leylin and the other acolytes looked at each other. Having no other

choice, they could only follow.

The hole was rather small. A grown man needed to crouch before they could enter. However, the tunnel became more spacious the deeper it went, until a number of guards could walk abreast, even raising the fire torches high did not touch the cave's ceiling.

“This is going to be troublesome! From the height of this cave, that ‘parent’s’ body will definitely not be small.” Leylin felt the leather sack hanging from his waist. If not for the multiple trump cards he prepared, he might have already sneaked away and left the group by now.

After all, his life was more precious than the wrath of a city's lord.

“Lord Viscount! There's a fork ahead!” A squad leader reported to Jackson.

“Let me have a look!” Jackson stepped forward.

Leylin followed behind. As expected, there seemed to be two perfectly similar tunnels ahead. Looking at the darkness of their unfathomable depths, one could not see the tunnel's end. It felt like walking into the huge mouth of a beast.

“The negative energy in here is becoming too dense. Some of our scouting methods cannot be used here!” The city lord's aide, the grey-robed person spoke.

“Call two men to reconnoiter each path ahead!” Jackson’s brows furrowed as he gave the order.

“It would be better to let me do it!” Leylin walked forward suddenly.

Since he knew that the ‘parent’ was extremely powerful, he did not want his side to lose too much battle strength.

“Since Mister Leylin has decided to step forward, then it’s for the best!” Viscount Jackson smiled.

Leylin walked forward several steps and took out a transparent crystal from his robes.

“Gurisitong - Jiaonateyer!” Leylin chanted. A black vertical pupil suddenly appeared within the depths of the crystal.

The vertical pupil was the same size as a human’s, but it did not have the white of a human eye. Looking at this pure black pupil made one feel as if it could tear their souls from their bodies.

“This is... The Negative Energy Eye!”

“Only acolytes who specialise in negative energy are able to use it!”

The acolytes behind began to whisper and their gazes contained more hostility and fear than before.

The Rank 0 spells of Magicians who specialises in negative energy are generally more destructive and their personalities were more bloodthirsty and savage than most other Magi. This normally meant being a Dark Magi.

The regular magicians' hostile looks were understandable.

Leylin did not have any inclinations of explaining himself to the people behind him whatsoever. His fingers exerted force and pinched the crystal to pieces.

The black pupil split into two. One floated into each tunnel.

Following the vertical pupils mentally, Leylin's closed his eyes. Viscount Jackson became rather nervous as he stared at Leylin. The group grew quiet, only the constant soft snapping noise of torches burning could be heard.

A few minutes later, Leylin opened his eyes, "On the tunnel to the left are a few mutated lizards. At its end is a large granite rock."

"As for the one on the right, I only know that it leads unknown distance downwards. My spell got smashed after I tried probing further."

“Since it’s that way, let’s all go down together.” Jackson pointed to the tunnel on the right.

The right side of the cave got damper and more humid. Leylin touched the mud walls and found a few moss-like plants strewn all over it dripping wet, “It’s moist!”

Leylin’s heart lurched, but his expression remained impassive. He took out a white handkerchief from his robes and wiped his hands clean.

“I’m afraid we’re nearing the nest of those strange creatures.”

Chapter 66: Rune Shackles

“Light! There’s a light ahead!”

A guard walking in the vanguard shouted.

Leylin took a look. Indeed, the far end of the tunnel was radiating light.

“Enter!” Jackson gripped his large sword with both hands and was the first to rush in.

The rest followed suit.

Light! Eye-piercing light radiated downwards from above!

Leylin’s eyes were stinging — tears flowed down uncontrollably. He immediately used his hand to cover his eyes.

“Argh!” ”Monster!” ”Be careful!”

Various shouts resounded, and weapons were brandished.

[Alert! Imminent attack ahead! Optimal response: step back and crouch!]

The A.I. Chip's voice intoned and projected a faint blue screen.

On the screen, a talon the size of a palm was clawing towards Leylin.

Leylin hurriedly retreated a step and crouched to dodge the attack.

Amidst the wails all around, Jackson's faint howling could be heard.

After the A.I. Chip's scan, Leylin could see that many lizard-like creatures were making use of their familiarity with the geography to attempt a massacre of Jackson and the squad of guards around him.

The sneak attack was so quick that when Jackson and the rest finally reacted, the whole squad already suffered heavy casualties.

As Leylin swept his gaze across the scene before him and his eyes finally adjusted to the bright light. He realised that the floor was already littered with corpses. Many of them had traces of having been chewed on by these strange creatures.

At that moment, only the 2 Knight level squad leaders and the grey robed figure, who always followed behind Jackson, were all that remained of the group with Jackson.

As for the acolytes, one had fallen to the ground and another had a large wound on his abdomen that was oozing blood.

At the apex of the cave, white-coloured jellyfish-like creatures were floating. The flash from earlier had radiated from their bodies.

“The surge of light radiated from these jellyfish could actually increase instantaneously and produce an effect similar to a flashbang grenade. The coordination demonstrated by these strange creatures that caused several deaths and injuries definitely hinted at some intelligence controlling them from behind the scenes!”

After light burst from the jellyfish, they seemed to have become a little dispirited as they floated around in the air. Although there was still some light emanating from their bodies, it was not piercing to the eyes. It seemed like the flash from earlier was a one time attack.

“This is a Flash Jellyfish, a kind of subterranean creature. Their earlier attack can only be used once. They need a day of rest before emitting such an intense burst of light again!”

Murphy appeared, clutching a book to his chest.

“What we need to deal with are not these parasitic organisms, but that fellow in the middle!” Leylin pointed to the centre of the cave, and smiled bitterly.

Leylin and the rest entered a large underground cave earlier, where the ceiling was littered with stalactites and Flash Jellyfish, which allowed them a panoramic view of the interior.

At this moment, in the cave, there were many mutated, yet familiar creatures. There were lizards, brown bears, and elks, all numbering over a dozen. At the centre most of them all, there was an enormous yellow snake that seemed to be the king, as it was guarded by the other creatures.

“It’s Mankestre - Great Withering Snake Mankestre!” Murphy’s book fell from his hands to the floor, letting off a bang.

“A.I. Chip, scan!” Leylin instructed.

[Great Withering Snake - Mankestre (Half-adult body)
Strength: 11.9, Agility: 6.5, Vitality: 14, Spiritual Force: 8]

[Abilities: 1 - Parasitic. A Mankestre is able to develop an extremely strong parasite in its body, and spread it to other organisms, making them its underlings.]

[2 - Wither. In any areas where a Mankestre has passed by, the plants will die, and become a type of nutrient for the Mankestre. An adult Mankestre possesses the strength of an

official Magus, and can transform an entire forest into withering ashes.]

[Source of information: <Creatures Illustrated Handbook>, <Nigel's Travels>]

The A.I. Chip delivered the information immediately in front of Leylin.

“Half-adult body? It doesn't seem to be at its adult stage!” Leylin first heaved a breath of relief, before shouting out loud, “Murphy, don't be fooled by its appearance. This is but a non-adult Mankestre. We still have a chance!”

“Indeed!” Murphy scrutinised the brown yellow colour of the huge snake and finally recovered from his fright, “An adult Mankestre is at least 100 metres long, and this snake is obviously not of that length yet. A number of parasites that it produces is also not right!”

“This huge snake is the cause of the withering woods?” Jackson asked at the side while staring at the huge snake as his Adam's apple moved.

“That's right! A Mankestre uses the juice of plants as their food. They are rather crafty and lazy, and also hate to move about. Basically, it uses the parasites to gather food for itself!”

Murphy, who had bountiful experience and wisdom, was extremely aware of the habits of the huge Mankestre Snake.

“So then, if we kill it, the herb production in Dark Night Woods can recover again?” Jackson used his long sword and pointed at the huge yellow snake that was protected by its parasitic mutated creatures.

“In theory, it should be the case as long as you kill it or drive it away. Although its death cannot revive the withering woods, it can still allow the prey and woods to slowly recover back to what it once was!”

Murphy smiled wryly.

Hiss! The snake coiled in the centre of the cave hissed, and let off a low, snake-like speech.

It was a kind of sound made by the friction of rubbing two pieces rotten leather together, which was extremely unpleasant to the ears.

The creatures surrounding Leylin and the rest seemed to have received orders, and howled as they charged forward!

Leylin casually took a look, “There are too many creatures, and the parent body is not yet dealt with, I must conserve my magic power!”

“A.I. Chip! Simulate the most optimal method of attack!”

Leylin pulled out his cross blade.

[Beep! Inputting situation data, initiating build with Host's stats!]

[Calculating battle simulation for the most optimal method!]

The A.I. Chip continuously displayed the attack style of creatures surrounding home.

Leylin's feet moved as he dodged a brown bear's attack. The cross blade in his right hand drew a strange trajectory, and deflected the paw of the bear, and directly pierced through its skull.

Bang! The huge brown corpse of the bear fell to the ground, and even the Mankestre Snake had taken notice, looking at Leylin.

Leylin's scalp tingled, as he hurriedly kept his distance.

“Nicely done!” Jackson shouted in admiration. His body seemed to turn into a gust of wind, and continuously ravaged the mob of

creatures, leaving a trail of blood behind him.

“It seems that Jackson has ignited the secret Knight technique! His technique should be enhancing his agility ”

The few acolytes also casted their Rank 0 spells that they had prepared and assisted in killing these creatures.

Leylin only took a look and did not bother about them anymore.

Sssii! The corpse of the brown bear that Leylin had killed rapidly decomposed. From the bones, many veins appeared, which turned into the creature that Leylin and the rest had been chasing earlier. The creature then climbed into the Mankestre's mouth.

The Mankestre Snake opened its mouth and revealed rows of razor sharp teeth. Its tongue coiled, as it swallowed the strange red veined creature into its belly.

“Retrieving its parasite huh?” Leylin was rather shocked.

After swallowing the parasite, the Mankestre Snake finally uncoiled and looked at Leylin and the group, who were unrestrainedly slaughtering the creatures. Its crimson eyes showed signs of rage.

Bang! The huge body of the snake shot out, and the entire cave trembled violently.

The huge Mankestre Snake's body moved at an alarming speed, charging towards Jackson.

“6.5”

“It's too quick! With an agility of 6.5, I can only see its afterimage” Leylin rapidly retreated, and at the same time, he used the cross blade to block his chest.

A surge of immense force came rushing over, and the cross blade that Leylin held onto flew in the air, completely broken .

“Such a strong force, and it's only a casual swipe!” Leylin's pupils constricted.

The Mankestre Snake opened its jaws wide, and its razor sharp teeth snapped at Jackson, bringing about a fish-like smell. If Jackson were to be caught, he would definitely die without a corpse left.

“Sir!” The remaining two Knights and the grey robed person shouted.

“Hah! Good try!” At the brink of death, Jackson finally released all of his internal energy, and the sword pierced at the crown of the snake with a speed that was hard to track by eye.

The sword, however, only left a white spot on the scales of the snake. As for Jackson, he used the force to rebound, and twisted his waist, evading the snap of the snake's jaw.

“Protect our Lord!” The two Knights rushed forward. The Mankestre Snake let out a ferocious roar, and directly gobbled the two Knights into its belly.

“Secondary Fireball!”

“Acidic Aqua Shot”

At this moment, the other acolytes also cast their spells, striking the body of the huge snake.

Bang! A black arrow with a yellow flame exploded from the body of the huge snake, revealing two scorched holes/wounds/gashes.

The huge snake let off a roar, which carried a tinge of agony. Its scales shook, and it sent its tail flying towards the few acolytes.

“The vitality of the snake is too high, any normal Rank 0 spells would not be able to affect its movement at all!”

The huge snake swatted its tail, and a few acolytes who were unable to dodge in time were turned into meat pancakes, and blood oozed from beneath the snake's body.

“No! Decker! Lancer!” Murphy cried hoarsely in anguish.

“There’s no choice, we have to retreat first!” The few remaining people huddled together, when the grey robed figure behind Jackson spoke in a deep growl.

“No! This damned worm dared to kill Decker and the rest! I will definitely not let it go!” Murphy’s eyes were rather bloodshot.

“I have a spell that can temporarily restrict its movements, the rest will be up to you guys.”

Murphy stepped forward, placed the monocle that he always carried in his hand, and tossed it towards the huge snake.

Bang! The glass shattered on the huge snake, and many dark red runes suddenly surfaced.

The dark red runes multiplied, and turned into the shape of a long chain, binding the snake within it.

“What a powerful restraining spell!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, “It will not be able to move for at least half a minute, so use whatever methods you guys have in that time.”

Chapter 67: Defence Potion

The fine rune shackles were the size of a strand of hair compared to the huge Mankestre snake. However, under the restraint of the shackles, the huge snake was helplessly locked to the ground, not even able to move.

“Hurry, charge!” Jackson howled, and the huge sword radiated light.

On the other side, the grey-robed person too lifted his cloak, and revealed a Half-Beast Man appearance as he hurriedly chanted an incantation.

Roar! The remaining creatures felt the danger that their parent was in, and rushed forward, with no thoughts for their own safety, towards Leylin and the rest.

“Go to hell!” Leylin pulled out a few fire red coloured explosive potions and decimated the remaining creatures into ashes.

“To the Mankestre snake, the eyes are their Achilles heel, and is even more vulnerable than the heart.

Leylin howled, at the same time chanting.

Along with the chanting of the mysterious and ancient Byron language resounding in the cave, a hoard of congealed and thick black oily bodies appeared beside Leylin, completely surrounding

him.

These black, oily figures circled around Leylin, giving off bubbles from time to time, and letting off a sound that was akin to decomposing material. While he continued to chant, the black oiled figures continuously changed shape, finally turning into a black lion head-like apparition.

“Go!” Leylin pointed.

The black lion head roared, and charged towards the crown of the huge snake which was being restrained.

Pu! The lion head immediately bit on both of the Mankestre snake’s eyes.

Sssii! The huge snake writhed continuously, letting off an agonised screech. The rune shackles on its body were also emitting off red smoke.

“Hurry!” I cannot keep this up much longer!” Murphy completely diverged from his scholarly image and howled without a care.

The black lion head continuously chewed on the head of the huge snake, and finally dissolved, turning into a puddle of greasy black oil, that covering the head of the huge snake, and eventually covered both of its eyes.

“It is now!” Leylin eyes flashed and withdrew a test tube. The contents radiated a blood red light, which excreted feelings of danger.

This was an explosive potion, but was much larger in comparison had a larger blast radius was larger in circumference as in compared to the previous potions.

The muscles of Leylin’s right arm bulged as he tossed the potion directly into the black oil.

Bang! A tremendous flame rose, completely engulfing the huge Mankestre snake, and burning it savagely.

The huge snake continuously tossed its head, which looked like a huge burning torch from, side to side.

The rune shackles around it also let off creaking noises which meant that it could not endure for much longer.

“The decomposing oil water that comes from the subterranean area, together with the A.I. Chip’s modified explosive potion gives off a combined attack of at least 9 degrees!”

Blue light in continuously flashed from within Leylin’s eyes, as he recorded the figures from the explosion.

“Pant! Pant! The earlier attack has already broken through most of the huge Mankestre snake’s defence! Now is the time to kill it!”

Leylin panted violently, and his face was extremely pale. It was like he had completely depleted his Spiritual Force and Magic Power, and he staggered several steps behind.

From an area of his sleeve which was concealed from others, another of the modified explosive potions, which was used earlier, appeared in his hands.

Leylin would never place his hopes completely on others, especially at crucial times like this.

At this moment, the Half-Beast Man had finished chanting his spell.

“The strength of my forebearer’s totem, transform now into frigid ice, and grant me the might to slay the Mankestre snake!”

The Half-Beast Man finished his spell, and touched lightly on Jackson’s sword.

Sssii!

On the blade of Jackson’s huge sword, a layer of frost began to envelop it, , and the frost grew more and more, before finally enlarging the of the blade to double of its original size, and turning it into a frost greatsword!

What the Half-Beast Man had cast was actually a kind of rarely seen spell which could enhance weapons!

“According to the scan of the A.I. Chip, at this moment, the greatsword in Jackson’s hands already has the strength of a basic level Magic Artifact!”

Leylin eyes flashed, “It is a rather decent enchanting technique!”

Jackson had obviously teamed up with the Half-Beast Man many times before. Earlier, he had been conserving his energy, and once the greatsword had completed the layer of frost, Jackson howled and raised it above him, charging and chopping towards the neck of the Mankestre snake.

The sword, which seemed like a giant crystallised ice sculpture, directly chopped at a blackened patch of the huge snake with Jackson’s strength of a Grand Knight.

Pu-chi!

Red hot blood flowed down continuously from a deep gash on the neck of the Mankestre snake, which seemed to be almost half a metre deep. One could even see the whites of the bones. The huge snake roared, and headbutted with all its strength.

Bang! Viscount Jackson was immediately knocked away, and even the breastplate he was wearing was dented inwards.

The frost greatsword landed upright by his side, burying itself halfway into the ground.

Ping Ping Ping! The layer of ice continuously cracked, and finally even the sword, which was made of steel, shattered into countless fragments that landed on the floor.

“It seems like this spell isn’t completely flawless either!” Leylin was still in the mood to observe leisurely.

However, at this moment, Murphy’s complexion turned red, “I can’t control it any longer!”

Under the continuous struggles of the Mankestre snake, the rune shackles around it finally collapsed with a rattling sound. As for the price of being able to free itself, the snake had already suffered a dozen wounds which penetrated through its scales.

As for the heavily injured Mankestre snake, its bloodshot eyes turned even more crimson. With lightning speed, it swiped and coiled its tail. Before Leylin could react, he realised that there was one less person beside him. The Half-Beast Man which originally stood there was now wrapped up in the snake’s tail.

“No! Save me!” The tail continuously constricted, and the huge snake’s figure almost covered the entirety of the Half-Beast Man.

At this moment, Jackson, who was not sure if he was still alive or dead, lay on the side, and could not answer his subordinate cries at

all.

Ga-cha! With a creaking noise, the ear-piercing sounds of bones shattering resounded in the air. The Half-Beast Man's distressed cries climbed higher in pitch, until finally, it turned into dead silence.

Leylin watched the huge, moribund snake attentively, as he drew a few potions of various colours.

Bang!

A huge black figure attacked, and hit a yellow test tube that had left Leylin's hands. In the surrounding area, a layer of yellow light appeared, and engulfed Leylin's entire body.

The immense might crashed into Leylin and he was sent flying, crashing into a nearby granite rock. Mud flew above his head as he landed, and there was even a huge impression left on the rock behind his back.

At the same time as Leylin was sent back flying, a layer of intense red flames extended from the snake's tail, and multiple colours of light also blossomed on the snake's body, finally resulting in the cries of the Mankestre snake.

The yellow light shattered into many pieces, before finally dissipating into the air.

Leylin's body was completely unscathed, and seeing the many spots of dazzling yellow light, he grimaced.

“The weakness of acolytes is that they always have no defensive measures!”

The defensive spell models for Rank 0 spells were extremely uncommon, as they were not very practical. When an acolyte is being attacked, rarely would they have time to chant those spells.

As a result, in battles between acolytes, whoever was struck first by a spell would end up defeated or killed.

This scenario would last until one reached the stage of an official Magus.

Apart from this, there was another method, which was to borrow strength from special items. For example, defensive or strange items which could instantly activate a defence spell.

However, such high leveled defensive items were even difficult to obtain for official Magus, so they rarely appeared in the hands of an acolyte.

Leylin and the other acolytes, together with the Half-Beast Man, all had no defensive items. At most, they only wore leather armour, which had absolutely no resistance against spells.

Moreover, a simple roll of the Mankestre snake would have

already been able to grind them into a meat paste.

“According to the records of the academy, there are still a number of acolytes who die at the hands of Knights and Grand Knights. However, there has never been any instance of an official Magus dying at the hands of ordinary humans!”

As for this yellow potion, it was Leylin’s latest experimental result - Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion!

A potion like this has already separated itself from the category of elementary potions. It was a kind of beginner’s potion, and even amongst the beginner potion category it was extremely difficult to brew.

As for the effect, it would produce a one-time defensive layer of light, which would defend against any spell or physical attack of ten degrees or less!

With Leylin’s amassed wealth from selling potions, together with the A.I. Chip continuous simulation, he had finally managed to make only two bottles of it.

The amount he spent for these had already exceeded over 1000 Magic Crystals!

“These potions are not easily affordable by others, and all official Magi attacks have an attack strength of over 10 degrees, so this Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion is best used only at the level of

battles between acolytes. However, every bottle costs at least 500 Magic Crystals. Even direct heirs to large families would not be able to afford it!”

However, for Leylin who had the help from A.I. Chip, which could elevate his success rate, combined with his original class/job(syn) as a Potions Master, he could brew the Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion, suppressing the cost to around 200 to 300 Magic Crystals. Although it still remained steep in price, as it was a trump card, it was acceptable.

“Leylin!” Murphy’s eyes widened, “You...Are you alright?”

“En! I’ve wasted an expensive defensive potion that I’ve acquired!” Leylin’s face darkened, and seemed to be extremely saddened by the loss.

“This damned beast, I’m going to kill it!”

On the other side of the battlefield, the huge Mankestre snake lay half dead on the floor, seemingly spent, and having wounds strewn across its body.

First, it was hit with Leylin’s hybrid attack, before almost having its head chopped off by Grand Knight Jackson. Afterwards, it escaped from Murphy’s rune shackles through brute force, before it was finally struck again by Leylin’s potions.

The snake head, which was always held high with pride, now lay

helpless on the floor. Its tongue hissed, and blood continuously flowed out from its neck area.

“After having suffered from such a devastating injury, no matter how tenacious the life force of snake type creatures are, they will absolutely still perish!”

Murphy gritted his teeth, and shot a green coloured pyramid shaft, which directly lodged itself into the eyes of the huge snake.

Pu! The snake’s eyes were finally pierced through, and a layer of creamy red and yellow liquid splashed out, which was sparkling yet translucent.

Chapter 68: Returning To Extreme Night City

“The eyes are where the life essence of the Mankestre snake is, and it looks like this huge snake is about to die!”

Murphy looked at the huge snake, which was in its last moments, and said rather bleakly.

“Be optimistic my old friend!” Towards Murphy’s bleakness, Leylin discovered that he actually could not utter any words of comfort.

After all, the casualties, this time, were too much. From a group of roughly 30 people, the Black Iron Guards were completely wiped out, and Murphy was the only acolyte that survived.

Moreover, the city lord and the Grand Knight, Viscount Jackson, was severely injured at this moment, and his life was in peril.

And the source of them all was this huge Mankestre snake!

“City lord? Right, Leylin! Hurry and look at Jackson!” Murphy slapped his forehead.

“You only thought of him now?” Leylin was rather speechless, and walked around the huge snake corpse, coming to the other side.

Viscount Jackson was lying on his back on the ground and his chest was sunken in a cavity. On the corners of his lips were traces of blood, and he was in an unconscious state.

Leylin hurriedly took a look, “3 broken ribs and the arm and leg bones are all also broken. As for the rest they are fine. With the Vitality of a Grand Knight, he should be conscious in a few hours.

“That’s good! This is the only good news I’ve heard all day today!”

Murphy walked towards that huge, lifeless snake, and said, “This seems to be a Mankestre snake which has not yet grown to its adult stage. If it was an adult withering huge snake, it could be very likely that the water content in our bodies would have been sucked dry the very moment we entered the cave!”

The huge Mankestre snake’s head fell onto the floor, and a pair of eye-shaped pearls were pierced by the pyramid shaft, and dazzling fluid flowed out from within.

“Even so, the materials on this huge snake, would also be worth thousands of Magic Crystals!”

Murphy caressed the yellow-brown scales of the huge snake as he muttered to himself.

Suddenly, the other eye of the Mankestre snake opened! Its gaze,

filled with hatred, immediately landed on Murphy. It opened its jaws, and the razor-sharp teeth was about to snap Murphy into two.

This huge snake was not completely dead!

Earlier it had feigned its death, and right now, it finally revealed its razor-sharp teeth and was about to kill this repulsive human.

Against such an attack, Murphy was completely not protected and he stood there stunned, not moving at all.

“Be careful!”

Right when the snow-white teeth was about to land on Murphy, a silver chain suddenly flew out and wrapped itself on Murphy's waist, pulling him out of danger's way.

A black arrow directly pierced the other eye of the snake, and the Mankestre snake continuously writhed and finally ceased moving.

Huff! Huff! Huff!

Murphy panted violently, “Ley... Leylin, thank you! I owe you my life!”

“No problem! You gave your support to me back then too, didn't you?” Leylin smiled as his gaze fixed on the huge snake, up until

when the A.I. Chip's voice sounded, [Target has completely lost all signs of life] did he heave a sigh of relief.

Under the detection of the A.I. Chip, although there were no more energy movements from the huge snake earlier, there was still a thermal response.

Of course, many kinds of creatures must be dead for a while before all thermal signs completely vanish.

However, because of that, Leylin was even more vigilant. Besides, intentionally or accidentally, he led Murphy forward and finally verified whether the large snake was truly dead.

“What a pity! If this Mankestre snake were to die before, its other eye would have absolutely been valued over 1000 Magic Crystals, but right now, the value of the whole corpse is greatly reduced.”

Leylin was somewhat helpless as he looked to Murphy, who was at his side.

“About the attack earlier— you actually did not dodge it, which makes me rather surprised!”

An unexpected flush reddened Murphy's cheeks, “After using the rune shackles, my Spiritual Force and Magic Power are greatly weakened. In this period, I am just another old geezer on the street....”

With regards to Leylin, who saved him earlier, right now it could be said that Murphy trusted him greatly and actually even shared such a secret with him.

“Alright! Let’s hurry and harvest the materials of this Mankestre snake, and then return to Extreme Night City!”

Leylin sized up the chaotic scene. Leylin and the three of them had absolutely no way to move those corpses on the ground, so they could only return back to Extreme Night City and ask people to retrieve these corpses.

With the death of the huge Mankestre snake, this area should no longer pose a threat in future.

“Haha... This time Leylin, your contributions have been the most, so you should be allowed to harvest the best material!” Murphy smiled.

Concerning this matter, Leylin did not have any notions of killing Murphy and claiming all the loot for himself.

Murphy did help him earlier, and on the other hand, right now Murphy and him were the only two acolytes left, so he would definitely monopolise a large portion of the resources, thus he did not have to take a risk and kill people.

From the whole Mankestre snake, the most valuable ingredient would be its eyes, after which the remaining materials would only

add up to a total of 1000 to 2000 Magic Crystals, which was not enough to bewitch Leylin yet.

If right now there was some rare materials worth ten thousand Magic Crystals, who knew if Leylin would harbour some bad intentions.

“Decent scales, combined with the snake skin, should be able to produce many sets of soft armour.” Leylin went forward and unsheathed his cross blade, before dissecting the huge snake. Murphy too helped by his side.

After a moment of being busy, Leylin and Murphy had harvested some of the more valuable portions of the huge snake. As for the remaining items, they could only be transported with help from the city lord’s castle.

Gu Lu Lu The axles of the carriage resounded continuously, and Viscount Jackson opened his eyes.

“I am...still alive?” What entered his vision was a sky filled with resplendent starlight, and he felt his body rising and falling in accordance with the movements of the horse carriage.

Viscount Jackson discovered that his chest was already bandaged, and a refreshing feeling dispersed the pain, which showed that the healing process was extremely professional.

“Who was it that saved me?” A doubt crossed Viscount Jackson’s mind, and he tried hard to untangle his thoughts.

“City Lord! You are finally awake!” A face with a white beard and white eyebrows appeared in front of Viscount Jackson.

“How is it? Do you still retain your memories?” Murphy shook his finger in front of Viscount Jackson.

“Was it you who saved me? How are the others?” Viscount Jackson struggled to speak, and his voice sounded hoarse, like a ruined bellow.

“It wasn’t me, but Leylin who saved you!” Murphy pointed at Leylin who was driving, “We three are the only survivors of the whole group... After exiting the woods, it took me a while to obtain this spacious horse carriage....”

“They’re all dead?” Viscount Jackson flung his head to the side and an unexplainable sorrow welled from the bottom of his heart.

“Lord Viscount! It seems like you are alright now!” Leylin turned back, and tossed a green bottled potion, “This is a healing potion, I hope it will be of use to you!”

Murphy caught it, and fed it into the mouth of Viscount Jackson.

After taking the potion, Viscount Jackson only felt a hot wave surging through his four limbs, and he finally regained some

energy from it.

“Towards Leylin’s generosity and grace of saving my life, I will definitely repay you when we return!”

“If possible, please give me all of the Hove Violet Leaves in the castle. That would be the greatest recompense!” Leylin raised his request without a tinge of restraint.

“Of course!” Jackson was stunned, before immediately agreeing.

With the advance of the horse carriage, the silhouette of Extreme Night City gradually appeared.

A few soldiers were still guarding the post, scrutinising the people that came and went.

Jackson looked at the distant scene, and his eyes quivered, and finally two streams of tears flowed....

The city lord’s castle’s reconnoiter group had perished completely. Even news of Viscount Jackson, as a Grand Knight, having been seriously injured had spread and immediately caused an uproar in Extreme Night City.

Even after two days, the news did not die down. Instead, it even spread throughout the area,

As the city lord of Extreme Night City, Viscount Jackson always used his status as a Grand Knight to suppress many dark factions. However, when the news of him being injured spread, it caused several ripples and undercurrents inside the city.

At this moment, the strength of the city castle was waning, even the few acolytes who were friendly towards Viscount Jackson had died. Jackson who was nurturing his grief had to face with all these, and was rather overwhelmed by all these.

Leylin who stayed in the villa outside the city heard some of the news.

However, since he had returned from the venture, he always holed himself in the experiment lab, and even refused many invitations from the city lord's castle and other factions.

Under the bright light, Leylin stared; his eyes fixated on a petri-dish.

On the surface of the glass petri-dish, a small red lump of flesh continuously swelled, and from it grew many tentacles.

Leylin picked up another pipette, and placed a drop of the yellow potion on the lump of meat.

Sssii! The meat dissolved, and turned into a puddle of crimson-red with yellowish blood fluid.

“I have finally managed to purify it, the primordial blood essence of the huge snake!” Leylin looked at the petri-dish, as if seeing the most precious treasure in this world.

“A.I. Chip! Scan composition!”

[Beep! Mission establishing, scanning in progress...]

[The list of genes has been generated, comparing to database....]

“99.8%.....”

[Beep! Similarity of the blood essence with a normal huge python: 99.8%! Determined as the blood essence of original huge pythons! After remodelling in the later stage, there were new types of genes...]

The A.I. Chip continuously reported the conclusions, and even projected the list of genes in front of Leylin’s eyes.

From the multicoloured image, the blood essence of the huge

Mankestre snake that Leylin saw earlier was actually the same with regular huge pythons.

“Indeed! This huge python is the result of an experiment by magicians!” Leylin nodded his head. He still remembered clearly that after the A.I. Chip had scanned the huge python, it had added the words half-adult to its name.

However, if not for the accuracy of the A.I. Chip down to the atomic level, Leylin would never unravel the secret behind it. Even other magicians would not be able to realise the difference.

“Two more days, and that area should be calm again!”

Leylin informed his subordinates that he was going to undergo a very long duration of experimentation and that they are not to bother him with any matters and then he secretly left the villa.

Chapter 69: Vestige Traces

The night was dark, and there was tranquility. Dried up old trees littered the surroundings, and on the branches, there were ravens ruffling their feathers.

Bang!

The grass patch below the tree tore open, revealing a dark passage beneath it.

Leylin was draped in black robes, and his face was veiled. One would not be able to see his face.

The nearby villa was still lit with lanterns, and the patrolling mercenaries did not know that their master had already left the villa.

In Leylin's experiment lab, there was a direct passage which Leylin set up himself, with no one being the wiser.

“Since that huge Mankestre snake is an experimental body, there should be some experiment labs nearby from magicians! Moreover, that huge Mankestre snake had actually occupied Dark Night Woods for a few years, and not one magician had stepped forward to deal with it. There could only be one reason for that!”

Leylin's eyes flashed, “That experiment lab is most likely abandoned! The magician in it, due to some circumstances, could

no longer look after it, or is most likely dead! That is why the huge snake could escape from it!”

For magicians, seeking ancient vestiges had always been in their best interests.

The remnants left by ancient Magi, such as official Magi experiment labs, would often contain many valuable data and ingredients, high levelled research, spells and Magic Artifacts with immense might. These were all items that magicians always sought after.

Rumour had it that more often than not, there were examples of acolytes who were lacking having stumbled upon ancient remnants, and beginning to wield tremendous power after that.

Of course, there were failed ventures and explorations where they finally died under the ancient mechanisms or curses from the corpses.

However, for magicians, searching for vestiges was still a very beneficial thing to do.

From an experiment lab which could create a half-adult huge Mankestre snake, any one item in it could let Leylin immediately get rich quickly, and even obtain more precious ingredients and knowledge to pave the way for him to advance into an official Magus in future.

“Since I have already found some traces, I will definitely have a look at the experiment lab!”

Leylin's gaze was determined. He was not afraid of risks, especially when the benefits strongly outweigh the risks.

For this venture, he had specially prepared many items, which were enough measures to counter against any sudden developments.

As for his subordinates? Not only were they easily susceptible to divulging news, but under the traps set up by official Magi, even Knights were only an existence slightly greater than ants. They were completely of no use, hence Leylin even kept his departure from them.

Leylin journeyed for several nights in a row. Since there were no people around, he could use many of his methods.

He splashed a green potion onto the ground, bringing about a ball of green coloured wind particles, which wrapped Leylin's body within them. His whole body seemed to turn into a breeze, and disappeared into the night.

What Leylin used was a hastening potion which he had formulated throughout the years.

As an outstanding Potions Master, no matter if it was using potions to journey or fight, he was entirely in his element.

In the original passage, where Leylin and the others had battled the huge Mankestre snake.

People had already been sent from the city lord's castle to retrieve the mutilated corpses and largely dissected huge Mankestre snake. What remained were many impressions on the ground, as well as traces of flames and frost, which spoke of the intense fight that had occurred previously.

“The scenario from earlier has already been recorded down by the crystal ball given by the academy. To use that to signify the completion of mission is absolutely acceptable.”

From the battle previously, Leylin had used the crystal ball to record only most of the exploration mission, especially the corpse of the huge Mankestre snake at the end.

With some ingredients from the corpse, as well as the record from the crystal ball, it could be said that Leylin's mission in Extreme Night City was finally completed.

However, he had no plans whatsoever to leave at all.

Not mentioning whether the mess of a war that Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was entangled in at the moment already had a victor, Leylin did not want to go back during this period.

He had just managed to formulate a modified formula for the

Azure Potion. Now would be the best time to break through into a Level 3 Acolyte, so why would he risk going back to the academy and expose himself in the process?

As for Extreme Night City, Leylin did not even see an official Magus, which put him at ease to carry out his experiments and breakthrough.

Leylin would wait for a buffer of three years after the dust settled for the war of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Although his advancement to a Level 3 Acolyte would still be fast that way, it would not be as eye catching!

At that time, he could figure out an excuse, and cover his tracks easily.

As for the corpses of the acolytes on the floor, naturally, they had already been inspected by Leylin. Back then, he had kept all the valuable items for himself before bringing the heavily injured Jackson and Murphy to leave the place.

“However, that group of acolytes were all paupers, and not a single one of them had more than 10 Magic Crystals! Only on that Half-Beast Man acolyte, there was still a frost smelted gold rune which can be considered to be rather good!”

Leylin grumbled in his mind, as he came to the centremost area of the cave.

Under the light radiated by the Flash Jellyfish, the whole cave was extremely bright. Leylin could see that on the ground at the centre, traces of where the huge Mankestre snake was coiled were still apparent.

“It actually managed to make such a deep impression, they are indeed of the same nature narrated by compendiums: an extremely lazy being.

Leylin crouched and felt the earth that was sunken in.

“A.I. Chip! Record composition!”

[Recording completed, comparing to normal earth data in the databank. The target has 0.0005% of compound remnants, and is tentatively determined to contain Maiké alloy!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

Maiké alloy was a type of artificial metal, made by spells of magicians, that was extensively used to construct incubation pools in experiment labs.

“This is right!” Leylin eyes flashed with glee.

“A.I. Chip, is it possible to follow the tracks of the snake and find its original breeding area?

[Scanning in progress! The target's data has been heavily covered by other creatures and is lacking in important information. Mission failed!]

The A.I. Chip's voice intoned.

Leylin scanned the surroundings. The ground was littered with claw marks from various creatures. Such was the devastation left by the parasitic abilities of the huge Mankestre snake.

“What a pity....” Leylin shook his head.

“However, according to the habits of the huge Mankestre snake and the clues left by the other traces, that experiment lab should not be far off from here!”

Leylin commanded the A.I. Chip, “A.I. Chip, scan every item in the surroundings!”

[Missions establishing, beginning imaging!]

Along with the A.I. Chip intonation, the image of a blue coloured map was projected in front of Leylin's eyes.

In the centre was a huge cave, with many small tunnels in the near vicinity. Leylin even found a few parasitic bodies that had survived through sheer luck. However, it was unknown how much longer they could live for when the parent was dead.

The map expanded until it finally reached the limit of its range.

Leylin's brows furrowed, " A.I. Chip, restart scan! Lower the precision to the lowest, and search in an extended perimeter! Begin running through a checklist of radioactive density!"

With the command, the map in Leylin's eyes turned more out of focus. However, the perimeter extended, almost encompassing the nearby geography of the cave too.

"Maintain this area and precision!"

Leylin walked out of the cave and began running towards a direction. Following his movement, the edge of the map also continuously expanded....

A few hours later, Leylin walked towards a large black granite boulder.

"The surrounding areas have already been inspected. Although the radioactive densities are higher, this should be where the shedding of the huge Mankestre snake took place previously!"

"As for the only place with no radiation, but not within the scope

of the A.I. Chip's scanning perimeter, this is the only place!"

Leylin looked at the large black granite boulder in front of him. This boulder was of the height of several humans, almost the size of a small mountain.

In the map that the A.I. Chip scanned, this huge boulder had absolutely no traces of radiation. Even standing before it now, the A.I. Chip still did not detect anything.

"This kind of scenario has happened several times back at the academy. It is due to the spell formations set by official Magi, which are interfering with the detection of the A.I. Chip!"

Leylin stroked the surface of the large black granite boulder. It was ice cold, damp, and had algae growing on it.

"However....What I must do to enter?"

Leylin exerted strength in his right arm and grabbed some of the rock powder.

"A.I. Chip! Analyse composition!"

[Beep! Mission establishing, in the process of gathering data....]

The A.I. Chip's voice continuously intoned, and a screen appeared in front of Leylin that was densely packed with the various data of the granite rock.

“It seems like there are no differences between this and a normal granite rock!” Leylin drew the data of normal granite rock and made a comparison. However, he finally had to acknowledge that the magician defended his secrets very well. Leylin had absolutely no way of finding the entrance to the experiment lab.

“However, since that huge Mankestre snake was able to come out, it means that the defense in the spell formation has some sort of problem. I just require more time to inspect....”

Leylin stroked his chin and began setting up a tent beside the granite rock.

He decided to stay here for a long time in order to continuously detect any loopholes or weakness in the spell formation, hoping to find a way to enter.

After all, there won't be anyone coming to the vicinity of the withering woods anymore, especially when the city lord's castle has sent people to retrieve the corpses of the acolytes, troops and the huge snake.

After chewing on several biscuits that he brought along with him, Leylin began to analyse the spell formation on the large black granite boulder.

Of course, he only dared do this as he was sure that the owner of the lab was already dead through his observations and conjectures. Who knew if that unknown magician had long since died a natural death.

“After having been here for so long, yet with no magicians coming out, the accuracy of this conjecture has yet been raised by 30%.

Leylin stared at the large black granite boulder before him with a zealous expression contained within.

“If I manage to dispel the spell formation, the items in there are all mine!”

For Leylin, who was a Level 2 Acolyte, an experiment lab belonging to an official Magus was a huge treasure trove!

“Only that... The traps set by official Magus are extremely dangerous. I must absolutely not be blinded by greed and fall into a trap!”

Chapter 70: Gnawing Slate

Time passed by. In the blink of an eye, Leylin had tarried beside the large black granite boulder for 5 days.

In those five days, Leylin tried every method he knew on the large black granite boulder. He finally found a few loopholes he could exploit.

Leylin already confirmed that the granite boulder had a spell formation set up within. But it was in a damaged state.

According to the wear and tear, this formation had already been in effect for over a hundred years.

The cause of this extensive damage might very well have had something to do with the huge Mankestre snake's escape earlier.

“Some portion of the magic spell formation has already been damaged by that snake. That's why there are detectable traces leaking out. Without those leaks, even with the A.I. Chip's assistance, finding this place would not have been easy.”

Glee spread across Leylin's face.

Due to his experiments these past few days, he managed to assemble a set of spells that gave him a 70-80% chance of opening the entrance to this experiment lab.

The cyclical timing inherent to this spell formation meant that the damaged parts only appeared at certain times. Leylin needed to wait for this window of opportunity.

The sun gradually set and the surrounding area became shrouded in darkness.

Owing to the death of the huge Mankestre snake, the withering woods would eventually recover its former vitality. Unfortunately, this would require at least a hundred years. Right now, there was only that deathly suffocating silence permeating the withering woods, which would insidiously choke anyone who dared enter.

Leylin did not care a whit. Oblivious to the heavy atmosphere, he sought out a level rock and started brewing potions on it.

Moonlight fell. Very soon the woods was enveloped in a layer of silver sheen. The full moon today was exceptionally bright. Curiously, there was a tinge of saffron tinting the moon.

Leylin snapped open the pocket watch he brought with him, “It’s almost midnight!”

He rose and sauntered to the side of the large black granite boulder. As moonlight from the full moon shone on the surface of the granite rock, its black stone skin suddenly came off and revealed a network of blood vessels coalescing into a silvery archway. They pulsed continuously as if absorbing the moonlight.

“This is it!” Leylin’s eyes flashed. He quickly emptied the contents of the potions he just brewed onto the surface of the granite rock.

Sssii! A large amount of white mist rose and corroded the surface of the rock, leaving the network of blood vessels in chaos.

“Karamanda....” Leylin chanted the incantation softly. His voice sounded extremely depressed like the muttering of a jilted woman.

In time with the chanting noises, the silvery network of veins settled and continued to combine, then finally turned into a circular passage.

Seeing this, Leylin was elated. His chanting voice became more frenzied as he repeatedly tossed the few ingredients in his hands into the passageway.

Bang! Along with Leylin’s final chant, the large black granite boulder completed its shape change. Close to Leylin, the silvery archway earlier disappeared. Instead, the entrance to a dark tunnel materialized.

“A fake passageway actually got conjured!” Leylin shook his head and shrugged his shoulders.

At that instant, the eyes of the black raven perched on his shoulders, glinted with human intelligence.

“By harnessing some of this spell’s effect, I should be able to use this raven to break into the experiment lab in a short timeframe. Everything it sees would then be relayed into my right eye like a holographic projection!”

As Leylin shut his right eye, the raven cocked its head lightly before giving a cry. Then, it directly flew into the dark tunnel.

Many scenes flashed past Leylin’s closed right eye.

He felt like he was flying. The scenery below him were all relayed into his mind’s eye.

The passage was extremely short. In moments, the raven reached the other end.

Leylin saw a small-sized villa appear in front of him. Its walls shimmered with spell light.

Green coloured vines crawled and filled the wall. On it were some sort of red-coloured flowers with what looked like bone petals.

“This is....” Astonishment surfaced from the depths of the raven’s eyes, “Devil Vines? Bone Eating Flowers? I originally thought they were all extinct, but there are actually some in here!”

On the villa’s entrance was a jagged circular hole the size of Leylin’s palm. Leylin surmised that this could be the spot the Mankestre snake broke through during its escape-way back when

it was but a youngling.

Near the hole, a white skeleton draped in black robes lay on a grey-coloured stone platform!

“According to the way the skeleton is positioned, it was obviously an acolyte like me who accidentally stumbled upon this place. He tried to break into the villa and perished in this sorry state!”

Leylin’s steeled his heart. He telepathically maneuvered the raven to alight beside the bones and let the bird pluck on it with its black claws.

A crash resounded, a heap of items fell from the robes.

A book, several yellow parchment paper, a heap of bottles, and a yellow bronze ring tumbled onto the floor. A ‘K’ symbol was inscribed on it.

“Seems to be some kind of identity verification!” Leylin casually had the bird fiddle with the ring and peep at the book.

After using the raven’s feathers to clear the dust, a row of esoteric patterns and cursive handwriting emerged.

“These characters...? They seemed to be in Ancient Terrestrial Elven language! I have seen these before in the library!”

Leylin was stunned. He immediately began to decrypt the words, “Terrestrials... Terrestrial Elves! Alchemist of the Terrestrial Elves, Toroazar!”

“It is actually information pertaining to alchemy!”

Leylin was in ecstasy, “It was mentioned in the library’s records that the Ancient Terrestrial Elves were renowned for their exquisite alchemy, as well as their enchanting capabilities! If I were to obtain this information, I may begin attempting some of the things recorded in the Lowian Academy Teachings....”

With the A.I. Chip’s overpowered calculation abilities, the Lowian Academy Teachings, which Leylin bought earlier, was already completely decrypted. Part of the data was about a method for synthesizing a Magic Artifact.

Of course, it was only a low-grade Magic Artifact. However, in Leylin’s current state, this was a rather huge temptation.

He, alas, spent most of his time on Potioneering and Magic studies, so he had next to no inkling whatsoever concerning Alchemy and Enchantment. Moreover, such high level information was always kept under rigorous control. Regular acolytes did not have the clearance to access them.

Even if Leylin had a way to synthesize a Magic Artifact, it would still be extremely difficult.

Luckily, with the Alchemy information material here and the simulation capability of his A.I. Chip, Leylin completely believed that he would be able to synthesize this Magic Artifact once he became a Level 3 Acolyte.

“Bring this book out!” Leylin was already thinking of retreating.

To him, just knowing that within the granite walls was an abandoned experiment lab with degraded defenses made today’s probe an extremely fruitful one. Obtaining advanced information on Alchemy was an unexpected bonus.

The raven grabbed the book with its claws with much effort. As it turned around, it lightly brushed the parchment paper. With a hissing sound, the ancient piece of paper disintegrated

Leylin was stunned, “Has it already eroded to this state?”

Hehe! Haha!

Just as Leylin’s raven was about to fly off with the book, the surrounding area reverberated with a child’s ominous laughter.

“The defence formation activated! Damn it, I only have two more minutes!”

The black raven flapped its wings, preparing to rise and fly away.

Ka-cha! The grey coloured platform split open, revealing a huge jaw serrated with razor sharp white teeth.

In one ferocious snap, the raven was torn to pieces.

Pu! On the surface of the giant black stone, Leylin crouched down and grabbed at his right eye with his hands.

A wave of searing pain hit him. It felt like someone was digging out his eyeball directly from its socket.

Huff Huff Huff panting heavily, Leylin slowly recovered a good while later.

The muscles of his handsome face contorted and red veins could be seen filling the white of his right eye. A blood vessel burst and drops of blood fell to the ground.

“Magic spell backlash!” Leylin sucked in a lungful of cold air and withdrew a red potion from his sack. He unplugged it and began drinking its contents.

Several moments later, Leylin stood up, feeling much better.

“Careless! I never thought that apart from the Devil Vines and Bone Eating Flower, there was even a Gnawing Slate.”

Leylin looked at the original position of the tunnel entrance. The

surface of the huge black granite boulder remained smooth. The entrance seen earlier seemed to be merely an illusion.

“Devil Vines, Bone Eating Flower, Gnawing Slate, and other mechanisms. I cannot infiltrate in this place right now, what a pity....”

Leylin deduced this from the spells he had in his possession and the ingredients he owned.

“I’m afraid that only after I advance into Level 3 Acolyte, will I be able to enter this experiment lab!”

Leylin concluded, “Anyway, I now known the true location and its access protocols. Moreover, I have visually confirmed the presence of precious informative material regarding Alchemy inside. So this venture was not a complete waste of effort!”

Right now, the experiment lab was too dangerous for Leylin. He was not someone who got easily dazzled by greed. He decided to leave exploring this place to a later date and returned to the villa to cultivate.

Leylin calmed down as he focused on resting and recuperating from the damage done to him by the spell earlier.

He then went towards the tent area where stowed his things. He then erased all traces and tracks left by his recent activities.

“This defence spell formation has lasted over a hundred years. There were almost no loopholes a random passerby could exploit. I only need to erase my tracks. Adding more defensive measures or illusory spells would be superfluous.”

Having finished arranging everything, Leylin took a last glance at the black rock. Then, without the slightest bit of hesitation, he left.

“I have warned them before about the laboratory in the manor, so Anna and the others would not dare enter it. If I can return undetected to my laboratory, I can keep what happened here a secret.”

“Concerning Extreme Night City, Jackson only suffered some superficial injuries. He should be mostly have recovered by now after following my treatment. He is most likely pretending to be seriously injured to lure any turncoat and renegade from their snake holes!”

“Whatever the case may be, matters regarding the city lord’s castle are not my concern. I need not understand them. When I get the promised Hove Violet Leaves, I will immediately begin brewing the potions needed to breakthrough into Level 3.”

To Leylin, increasing his own power was all-consuming. Otherworldly influences and the sort were considered a waste of energy. Since he did not care about such things, he was also disinclined to paying attention to these matters.

But if anyone dared to entertain the idea of harming him, he would kill them!

As far as magicians were concerned, eradicating a few worldly powers or factions required almost no effort.

Chapter 71: Preparing To Breakthrough

The heat wave caressed the earth. In the blink of an eye, a few months passed, and it was autumn.

In the small villa, Leylin swirled a tastefully refreshing iced grape juice in a wine glass.

He was attired in a leisurely frivolous apparel favoured by nobles and looked quite lackadaisical.

“A.I. Chip! Bring up my current stats!”

[Beep! Leylin Farlier, Level 2 Acolyte, Knight. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 3.3, Vitality: 3.2, Spiritual Force: 7.1, Magical Power: 7 - (Magical Power is in synchronisation with Spiritual Force). Status: Healthy]

“I have finally reached the 7 Spiritual Force bottleneck!” Leylin sighed as he looked at the data.

After getting back from his solo exploration several months ago, Leylin got busy brewing potions to breakthrough the Spiritual Force bottleneck.

Viscount Jackson had expeditiously sent over a warehouse full of Hove Violet Leaves. At the same time, Fraser and the others

continued to purchase ingredients found elsewhere as per Leylin's standing orders.

Sadly, the modified Azure Potion's brewing success rate was on the low side while consumption of Hove Violet Leaves was outrageously high. On top of that, Leylin could only take in the potion during the most optimal times recommended by the A.I. Chip for maximum medicinal effect. It was only now that he reached a Spiritual Force of 7.

“Young Master! Fraser's back!”

On the other side of the door Anna wore a black gauze ensemble that showed off her alluring curves beneath the fine muslin, especially her snow white thighs which was seductively enclosed in black fishnet stockings.

Right now she acted as Leylin's chief aide, at the same time she had control over the finances, which could be considered as having high authority. However, in the presence of Leylin she was as gentle and as obedient as a little pussycat.

“Let's go! I'll go meet him!”

Leylin got up and left the room, his leather shoes gave off a thudding noise on the floorboard with each step.

“Young Master!” Upon seeing Leylin's arrival, two maids hurriedly curtsied.

“En?” Leylin suddenly walked in front of a maid. She had snow white thighs and perky breasts, but right now her head was lowered and she dared not move.

“You’re new here?” Leylin caressed her smooth chin. Her face still had some residual baby fat on it making her look extremely adorable.

“Yes... Yes, I am Trixy, the daughter of Luke who works in your farm ranch milord!” The maid replied softly did not dare reject Leylin’s teasing.

“Work hard!” Leylin waved his hands as he left.

“That maid earlier should now be very agitated huh?” Leylin slowly rubbed his fingers against each other as he revealed a mischievous smirk.

Ever since he had been transported to this world, because he occupied the body of a youth, he realised that his attitude was reverting more and more towards one befitting the host’s age. During emergencies or crises, it was not obvious. But now that he was in safe haven, he could not help but have some notions of tomfoolery.

He expunged the expression on his face as he strolled to the warehouse. He was once again the great and stern magician lord.

“Young Master!” Fraser stated as he half knelt on the ground. “Your subordinate, I have collected another 20 pounds of Hove Violet Leaves from Austere Winter City. They have all been stored inside the warehouse!”

“Very good!” Leylin walked to the warehouse, and took a look at the amount and quality of the Hove Violet Leaves.

Amongst the whole pile, the only ones that could be used for potion brewing were those whose central stems were thinner than the stalk of an oat. The amount of Spiritual Force an Azure Potion provided remained considerable enough to justify Leylin’s continued use, despite the increasingly high resistance towards the potion he was developing.

The bizarre purple leaves filled half of the warehouse. There was a strange scent permeating the air, a rather stinging sulfuric pungence.

Leylin casually picked up a purple leaf, “A.I. Chip, detect properties!”

[Beep! Gathering data!]

After a brief pause, the various properties of the Hove Violet Leaves were projected onto Leylin’s visual field. The chemistry, the medicinal properties— even the smidgen of various residue from other items on the surface of the leaf— all projected by the

A.I. Chip.

“Based on this inspection, this batch of Hove Violet Leaves will still do!” Leylin nodded his head.

“Young Master!” Fraser lips moved, yet he did not speak.

“Say what you want to say!” Leylin’s brows furrowed.

“All the Hove Violet Leaves in Extreme Night City have now been purchased by us. What remains are those of poor quality. In fact, Greem and I have already seen a number of counterfeit batches from traders who wished to hoodwink us.

“Indeed, Hove Violet Leaves are a special product only found in Eastwood Province. They take at least a year to grow!”

Leylin stroked his chin, and estimated the amount of Hove Violet Leaves in the warehouse.

“Put our purchasing drive on hold until next year’s Hove Violet Leaves hit the markets. We can then resume buying them again!”

From this recent batch of Hove Violet Leaves, Leylin discovered that the quality was getting poorer and poorer. Some could not even be used for potion brewing.

Indeed, it seems like he purchased quite a huge chunk of the total

Hove Violet Leaf production in this area.

The ingredients in the warehouse should be enough to meet my requirements for manufacturing enough potions to get to Level 3 Acolyte. As for official Magus, it is not something that I can consider right now.

Leylin entered into deep thought. Right now his Spiritual Force has already reached 7. He has long since brewed the Reactive Elixirs. Advancing to Level 3 Acolyte no longer posed any problem for him at all.

However, Leylin still knew nothing about how to advance to official Magus from Level 3 Acolyte. Even though Leylin was authorized to access the academy's library, he had not found any hint of the process.

It seemed like the academy had forbidden all information pertaining to this topic.

“Whether the academy or the market, I have always paid special attention to information related to official Magus. Until now, I could not even unearth a single clue.

This was also why Leylin was hesitant about leaving Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

The higher ups in the Magus World kept a tight lid on all information regarding how to advance to official Magus. More so

for Leylin, who became an acolyte from afar. He had to fulfil certain requirements and run errands before he would be granted a peek at the advancement methods to study them.

“This is something out of my control. Maybe the Magus experiment lab has something that I can profit from?”

Leylin thought again of the Magus experiment lab concealed near the withering woods.

After his previous stint there, he could already confirm that the person who left the experiment lab was an official Magus. Moreover, it had been forsaken for a long time already.

This was a piece of good news.

He only needed to be rid of all the spell formations laid on the experiment lab. Then, everything in it would be his, including the unlucky magician's items lying just outside the door.

“Level 3! I only need to advance to Level 3 Acolyte, and imbue another set of Rank 0 spells so I can depart!”

Leylin made up his mind.

.....

In a small secret lab with an extremely simple layout, there

weren't many household items, only a wooden bed in the middle.

Leylin sat cross-legged atop the bed. Before his impassive face was a tangerine-yellow potion.

He was prepared and determined to breakthrough to Level 3 Acolyte.

He did not breathe a word of this to anyone. Like before, he informed Anna that he was just going to carry out an experiment. No matter what happened, he didn't want any interruptions.

It was not that he couldn't trust his subordinates but they had neither the strength nor the ability to render aid if anything untoward happened. They wouldn't be of much use so he might as well hide the fact that he was attempting to breakthrough.

After all, he 'disappeared' from the villa from time to time. His manor staff had gotten inured to it by now.

Once he had accomplished what he set out to do, when he next appeared before his people, everything would have been fait accompli.

Although there might not be any prying eyes or ears, especially any spies sent by his adversaries, he was conscientious of the possibility.

"Level 3 Acolyte, the final step before official Magus. For first

grade and second grade acolytes, Level 3 has always been hailed the peak of cultivation.

A Level 1 Acolyte could merely use energy particles, but could not cast any spells yet. Their fighting strength was roughly equivalent to a Knight's. As for Level 2 Acolytes, they were able to cast some Rank 0 spells. Though these were simple ones, it bolstered their battle abilities to such an extent that they surpassed the Knights.

Level 3 Acolytes, on the other hand, had exponentially greater Spiritual Force than regular humans. They had a more profound understanding of spell theory and its uses in combat. They were masters of techniques like instantaneous casting, which enabled extremely rapid casting of prepared spells. Even Grand Knights were not their opponents.

Moreover, Level 3 Acolyte had always been considered the preparatory stage to becoming an official Magus. The faster one advances as a Level 3 Acolyte, the higher chances of eventually becoming an official Magus.

Among Magus academies and factions, the number of official Magi was extremely small. Level 3 Acolytes were universally considered the backbone of any academy's or faction's battle strength!

Any young Level 3 Acolyte was counted as a valuable asset of the academy. These institutions were inclined towards dedicating resources to nurture them, hoping that these seeds would advance beyond Level 3 Acolyte in the future.

“Breaking through Level 3 Acolyte requires mastery of two spell models, a Spiritual Force of 7, and the aid of Reactive Elixirs!”

Leylin picked up the tangerine-yellow potion before him.

“I have long since gotten both the elixir and the requisite spell mastery. Now, with the help of the Azure Potion, I have also met the Spiritual Force requirements, all within a few months. This speed has long since surpassed Jayden’s aptitude. A fifth grade acolyte!”

Even if they were genius acolytes of the fifth grade, before the huge gulf between Level 2 Acolyte and Level 3 Acolyte, 3 years would be the minimum they would spend getting there.

However, after obtaining the potion, Leylin’s speed had long since surpassed that of Jayden and the rest. In no time at all, he had reached the standard required to advance to be a Level 3 Acolyte.

“As long as my Spiritual Force gets enhanced, even if the breakthrough fails, I can always make another attempt. My body would suffer some major damage though, so being successful in one go is for the best!”

For the final time, Leylin mentally reviewed all information regarding advancement to a Level 3 Acolyte. After confirming that he had not left anything out, he popped the cork keeping the tangerine-yellow potion securely plugged.

“This Reactive Elixir is not meant to be drunk!”

Leylin undressed and smeared the Reactive Elixir over his face, limbs and chest.

The potion felt rather cool wherever he smeared it. However, after a few moments, a wave of heat gradually coursed through his skin. In an instant, his skin started to shudder and turn beet red.

[The Reactive Elixir is taking effect, medicinal properties under surveillance!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

As the potion continued to take effect, Leylin felt as if the potion coating his skin had come alive and was worming its way through his pores and into his body.

Chapter 72: Advancing To Level 3 Acolyte

An itch!

An unbearable itch!

Leylin felt that his bones had split open and many ants came crawling out from within. An extremely itching sensation was coursing through his body at this moment.

“Damn it! And I actually have to enter a deep meditative state under this condition and remodel the mind runes.”

Leylin’s face turned red. He clenched his teeth and resisted the urge to scratch his body as he closed his eyes.

Due to the adverse yet intense effect on his body, Leylin spent several more times longer to enter a meditative state.

Inside the meditation, Leylin seemed to have come to a place.

The surroundings were a grayish blur. Up in the air, there were many lights which seemed like stars, illuminating this place.

Leylin lifted his head. In the air were 24 mysterious runes—glowing with a fluorescent light— which gathered to form a circle.

These were the mind runes that he had painstakingly constructed

during the past few years.

Although these mind runes were all constructed through various special means, each and every one of the construction required a huge amount of effort and time. Previously, Leylin had spent more than a year before he could finally construct them in his mind.

“The mind runes of a Level 2 Acolyte cannot be considered to have fully consolidated. A Level 3 Acolyte has to integrate the mind runes together based on the foundation set in Level 2 Acolyte. Moreover, there needs to be a reinforcement of the sea of consciousness!”

Leylin was extremely curious towards that state too.

Right now, he was in a completely ‘conscious’ state. The sea of consciousness did not appear in any parts of his body. At least, the A.I. Chip had already used a microscopic scan at the atomic level on his body but yet could not find anything.

“The cultivation of Magi Spiritual Force, may very well have crossed over into the aspect of souls!”

Leylin let out a sigh from the bottom of his heart. And at this moment, the sea of consciousness had a phenomenon.

A layer of tangerine-yellow light continuously permeated over the blurry, grayish mist. Not long after, the whole of the sea of consciousness turned into a bright tangerine-yellow.

“This is the effect of the Reactive Elixir! It was only with a potion that can be smeared on the body, and I also know of the ingredients it is made up of, but that it can actually affect my sea of consciousness, that is really mysterious....”

Before Leylin could gasp again, the tangerine-yellow light immediately rushed up into the sky, as if it wanted to dye the 24 mind runes into a tangerine-yellow colour too.

Bang!

The mind runes let off a glow and rejected the contamination of a foreign object, A huge force of impact travelled over. Leylin’s vision darkened, and he almost fainted.

“Suppress it!” Leylin hurriedly borrowed the strength of his Spiritual Force, to suppress the resistance of the mind runes.

Pop!

Towards the mind runes that he constructed, Leylin’s mastery over them was not little. A few seconds later, the 24 mind runes all stopped resisting, and they were dyed a tangerine-yellow

Under the contamination of the light, the many mysterious patterns appeared on the surface of the mind runes.

These patterns continuously kept extending till they had completely covered the surface of all the mind runes.

Bang! The 24 mind runes finally stuck together, forming into an even greater rune.

In Leylin's sea of consciousness, many patterns also appeared. And after the presence of these patterns, the sea of consciousness turned even more resplendent and transparent, as if it were being reinforced.

After the reinforcement, as if listening to some command, the tangerine-yellow light hurriedly retreated, immediately vanishing in the sea of consciousness.

The large mysterious rune let off a glow, and Leylin's consciousness was pushed out from it.

“Where is this place?”

Leylin grew confused; suddenly releasing that he was in a mysterious place. The area was pitch-black, with no light whatsoever.

He wanted to reach out, but there was no concept of “hands” as if he never had any hands before.

In this manner, he floated in the air with no concept of time, yet he couldn't move.

To Leylin, in this space, every minute was like a dozen years.

This feeling could completely drive a sane person over the cliff.

Leylin was somewhat frustrated, “Haven’t I advanced into a Level 3 Acolyte yet? Why would I come to this space? How long has the time passed?”

Suddenly, Leylin’s heart jumped, “A.I. Chip!”

[Beep!]

A bright blue screen was projected in front of Leylin and although it could not illuminate the darkness, still it made him feel much better.

[Scans have picked up that the Host’s Spiritual Force is in an abnormal state. Under this circumstance, the Host will fail the breakthrough to a Level 3 Acolyte in 5 Minutes 23 Seconds! 13 Hours 45 Minutes later, due to the failure of all organs death will ensue! Whether to use Magic Power to get rid of the status? Yes/No?]

“Yes!” Right now Leylin completely did not feel any Magic Power

left in his body, but the A.I. Chip could still circulate it, which made him elated.

[Obtained Host's confirmation and now transferring Magic Power. In the process of getting rid of the abnormal status....]

Along with the A.I. Chip's voice intonation, there was suddenly a strange movement in the pitch-black space.

Leylin's eyes flashed open. He realised that he was still in the secret lab and that not much time had passed since he began.

“During the advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte, there are actually such strange scenarios!”

Leylin's expression was solemn. His degree of progress was too quick, most of his knowledge had been obtained from the library and also from the simulations and conjectures of the A.I. Chip.

He had no info about some scenarios of advancing into Level 3 Acolyte.

“Normally speaking, when many Level 2 Acolytes are in the midst of advancing, they all have their Professors to explain in detail to them... but I'm unfortunate! Even Professor Kroft wouldn't have expected that I would face a breakthrough this quickly!”

Leylin held onto many secrets and would never tell the truth. In Kroft's eyes, he was just a newly advanced Level 2 Acolyte, so why would he tell him about some notes to pay attention regarding the advancement to a Level 3 Acolyte?

Furthermore, the books in the library were available commonly. Many things in it had vague explanations. Even if Leylin had the A.I. Chip and was able to erase the false information, together with his experiments, he wouldn't be able to obtain the perfect results.

This caused Leylin to encounter a phenomenon that occurred during his advancement and he was at a complete loss.

“Luckily I had the A.I. Chip this time, if not I will be finished! The road to becoming a Magus is indeed very precarious!”

There was some lingering fear in Leylin's heart.

But this, too, confirmed his deductions. The A.I. Chip had been with him when he was transported and for some unknown reason, it had merged into his soul.

Hence, when his soul met with an abnormality and was isolated and without help, he could still activate the A.I. Chip to get rid of the inner influences from the outside.

“So, advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte is not about the combination of the mind runes nor reinforcing the sea of consciousness, but

about the space of darkness that comes after!”

Leylin suddenly understood much more. All these were usually precious information secrets that were not announced by professors or the academy, many factionless acolytes usually died during this aspect.

[Beep! The Host’s Spiritual Force has some change and is more lively. The Host has advanced into a Level 3 Acolyte! Spiritual Force increasing....]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

Following which, Leylin felt dizzy, and his Spiritual Force increased at a rapid speed.

7.2

7.3

7.5

.....

9.7

The Spiritual Force which seemed to ride on a rocket had continuously increased. When the final number jumped, it turned into 10.1, and finally stabilising itself.

“My head hurts!”

With the sudden increase of the Spiritual Force, right now Leylin’s body could still not adapt to the change. He had a runny nose and when he touched the area, he realised that he was bleeding from his nostrils!

“The increase in Spiritual Force is too fast, and the body could not take it!”

Leylin smiled wryly but very soon his expression changed and cracking noises came from within his body. At the same time, intense pain travelled from all parts of his body continuously.

Leylin’s facial muscles contorted and he fell flat on the bed, like a shrivelled up shrimp.

“Damn it! Damn it! The Reactive Elixir’s effect is up and the backlash from the potion has started!”

Leylin howled, “A.I. Chip! Begin to coordinate with the Magic Power and get rid of the remnants from the elixir!”

A layer of a grayish-black halo of light appeared and floated on his body, enveloping his whole body. Along with the flickering of the halo, much of the yellowish-black pus was expunged from Leylin's pores, releasing a very acute stench.

A dozen minutes later, Leylin struggled to get up. He took out a red-coloured potion from the bag lying beside him and drank it fully before his expression changed for the better.

At this moment his body was drenched in sweat and pus, bringing about an acidic stench, as if he had just been scooped out from the sewers.

Leylin tried to pick himself up. His face was pale stricken and he was weak in the knees. His eyes were sunk in as if having been bedridden with an illness for many months.

After pushing open the door of the secret lab, Leylin jingled the bell placed beside the door.

Ding Ling Ling!

A crisp yet penetrating sound rang, and it travelled far after a while.

“Young Master! You...” A few minutes later, Anna brought two maids as she rushed over. It seemed like Leylin's lips were covered by his hands.

“It’s fine! Send me to the bathroom! I wish to take a shower!”

“Do you want me to call the herbalist or doctor over?”

“No need!”

Half an hour later, Leylin lay in a pool that was constructed from marble. The warm water flowed over his body, bringing away the dirt and grime from him.

Anna was buck-naked as she nestled up against Leylin. She used a white towel to scrub his body.

“Mi....Milord! Your deer blood soup and steak!”

On the other side, Trixy too was stark naked, and her delightful curves were all exposed in front of Leylin eyes. She blushed, as she carried a propped up tray over.

The ray was made of wood and floated on the pool. Leylin picked up his utensils and ate voraciously.

Some time later, Leylin wore a loose bathrobe and reclined on a nearby chair. His back leaned against Anna’s chest and enjoyed the sensational perky abundance.

And at his side, Trixy and another beautiful were giving a massage to Leylin.

They had only donned some clothes, which were smaller than a palm. The private areas weren't covered, only faintly discernible at times. This made it even more embarrassing yet alluring.

Trixy and the other maid were only daughters of farmers and they had toiled in the farms since they were young. They had a layer of calluses on their hands even. However, they were extremely young and their slender figures were beautiful. Their bodies radiated the vibrancy of youthfulness. Compared to Anna, it was a kind of wild flavour.

However, right now Leylin completely did not have any interest to engage in an intense bout with them. Instead, he felt somewhat traumatic about the advancement today.

Chapter 73: ReExamination

“A.I. Chip! Bring forth my current stats!” Leylin commanded inwardly.

[Beep! Leylin Farlier, Level 3 Acolyte. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 3.3, Vitality: 3.5, Spiritual Force: 10.1, Magical Power: 10 - (Magical Power is in synchronisation with Spiritual Force). Status: Healthy]

The A.I. Chip projected the data in front of Leylin’s eyes. Apart from him, nobody else could see it.

Leylin closed his eyes, yet his mind was rapidly processing and thinking.

“En! My Vitality has increased by 0.3, which should be related to the use of the Reactive Elixir. Also, not only did my Spiritual Force increase to 10.1, I can feel that my Spiritual Force is brimming with more energy as compared to before. My perception towards energy particles in the air has increased too, so casting Rank 0 spells should now be easier!”

“The realm of a Level 3 Acolyte is indeed not something a Level 2 Acolyte can compare to. However, the process of advancing is too perilous!”

Leylin put on an expression of lingering fear. No matter if it was

his consciousness being trapped in the black space, or the backlash from the Reactive Elixir, they were all developments which he had not expected.

To Leylin, all the data and information he had garnered was still too little. Although the A.I. Chip's calculation abilities were extremely tremendous, if the basic information was not there, being able to simulate the correct advancement technique was already considered to be not bad.

As for the setback met during the advancement, due to the various differences in Vitality between people adding on to the shortage of information, even the A.I. Chip was unable to predict them.

“After all, in the library that Abyssal Bone Forest Academy opened for its students, much information had been restricted. Some high levelled information was not even released to be read by the acolytes!”

“Also, even if the A.I. Chip's calculation abilities are comparable to 10 supercomputers, the Magus World has, at least, tens of thousands of years of history. With all of the hundreds of thousands of acolytes experiments, the results and models will surpass the A.I. Chip's calculation abilities!”

“The advancement, this time, was indeed rather lucky, and luck played an important factor in it!”

Leylin's face turn solemn, “I cannot go on like this next time!

This is only for advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte! In the future, when I advance into an official Magus, I won't be so lucky if something like this happens again!"

The difficulty of the advancement from a Level 3 Acolyte to an official Magus far exceeded that of advancing from a regular human to a Level 3 Acolyte,

And if at that time there were some mistakes or oversights due to negligence, even if Leylin had a few lives, it wouldn't be enough to save him.

"After returning, I must inquire greatly about all the details pertaining to advancement into an official Magus, and not try to break through blindly again!"

Leylin gave himself this mission for the future.

"What's next is to wait until my body has adapted to the sudden increase in Spiritual Force, and muster the few Rank 0 spells that only Level 3 Acolytes can learn, then go back to reexamine that lab!"

Leylin opened his eyes and sent Anna and the other two maids away. After setting up a circle of warning with a spell formation, he dragged his weary body onto the bed on the other side and entered into slumber.

In the blink of an eye, half a month had passed like that.

Night and the splendor of moonlight shone upon the ground. It was another full moon night.

Nearby the withering woods, beside that same large black granite boulder, Leylin muttered an incantation and repeated the same procedure as before.

Seeing the same dark hole of the cave, Leylin smiled and walked in.

After the observation of his previous exploration, he had already roughly understood the rules that were governing the spell formation. Moreover, he recorded all the danger inside there and had a way to counter them.

Furthermore, he had already advanced to a Level 3 Acolyte and had more confidence to break the defensive mechanisms laid by the unknown Magus.

The black tunnel passage was very short, and the surface was extremely shiny, reflecting Leylin's black robed figure. It was even projected at multiple angles on the wall behind Leylin.

The villa that Leylin had seen previously was at the back of the tunnel. The Devil Vines and Bone Eating Flowers still littered the floor. There were even grey slates on the floor, and within it resided the Gnawing Slate.

On the door of the villa, there was a circular hole. At the side of it was a corpse and a black diary which brought lustre lay beside the corpse. Seeing this book that had records of Alchemy, Leylin's heart began to palpitate faster.

In Leylin's eyes, the exterior of the villa was set up with a dangerous halo of light coming from magic spells, and it was unknown how many traps were concealed under the brilliant light.

Hehe! Haha!

Just as Leylin's right foot stepped on the stone slate, a childish laughter sounded. The slates on the floor twisted open and revealed a mouth filled with razor sharp teeth, snapping viciously at Leylin!

"The first defense! Gnawing Slate!" Leylin smiled and tossed a gob of black stuff into the huge mouth.

Ka-Cha! The huge mouth gobbled up the black mass.

Pu! The grey mouth chewed, and immediately spit the black residue out. A red tongue continuously flickered outwards, and spat a yellowish green spittle.

This scene looked very much like a regular human eating something disgusting and spitting it out.

“With Stinky Stench Flower, Faeces Carapace Mantis, and the Rotten Stemmed Grass as the components of this vomiting powder! It is indeed the bane of the Gnawing Slate!” Leylin looked at the grey slate vomiting again, which immediately grew two small legs as it ran away, and the sight made Leylin laugh.

“To the unknown Magus, this should be a temporary lab since the spell leaned towards concealment. As for its resistance, there should only be 3 layers! Moreover, using the Gnawing Slate, Devil Vines and Bone Eating Flowers combination, this is the trademark defensive measures of the Michael School of Thought!”

Leylin walked towards the front door, and immediately grabbed the black diary with his hands.

It was extremely heavy, and carrying it felt like carrying a brick. It was probably made with special materials.

Leylin kept the diary in his robes and walked towards the large door.

A layer of blackish green vine immediately wrapped around the door, and on it, many red petals bloomed. The petals assembled, and actually formed the face of a female.

“Intruder! This is somewhere that you shouldn’t have come!” The petals formed the opening and closing of the lips as the female talked.

“The Magus in there is already dead, I will inherit his fortune! As for you, I will keep your existence alive, and give you all the nourishment you require for evolving, how is it?”

Leylin took a red coloured fruit from his sack, “To you, the whole experiment lab cannot even be compared with this ingredient in my hand!”

“With it, you may even leave in the future, and regain your freedom, returning back to the woods where you came from....” Leylin spoke softly, with a tinge of beguilement.

“Freedom!” Hesitation and contemplations streaked across the woman’s face.

“I cannot betray the promise from before! Outsider, please leave!” The woman struggled, but she still rejected Leylin’s proposition. A green vine continuously writhed, as if it would strike anytime.

“Sigh....” Leylin returned the fruit to his sack and sighed, “I thought that I wouldn’t have to strike!”

“Stubborn intruder, only death will be your ending!”

The Bone Eating Flower howled, this time changing into the face of a male, and many black vines immediately came lashing forward.

Bang! The black shadow charged forward, and Leylin ducked with his body. The thick vines slapped the floor, and the stone pieces flew in the air, revealing a huge pit.

“Don’t be so impulsive, what if you damage the experiment lab?”

A layer of green light flew into the vine in the air, turning into a ball of light, and enveloped the flower and vine completely. The vine’s attack speed decreased.

Leylin’s brows furrowed and he took out a black powder from his sack, before sprinkling it all over the ground.

Moreover, as he scattered the powder, Leylin hurriedly chanted an incantation.

“Intruder! Die!” The human face formed by flower petals roared, and continuously changed, sometimes it was the voice of a male, and sometimes it had the face of a female.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

The blackish green vines were continuously brandished and hit many holes in the surrounding walls of the cave.

Leylin relied on the stats of a Knight to dodge, and his incantation never stopped.

Finally, after Leylin ran around the villa, the surrounding was already scattered with the black powder.

At this moment, the chanting stopped. Leylin pointed a finger at the human face, “Go to hell! Cloud of Afterlife!”

Boom!

The black powder continuously dissolved, turning into a gaseous body, and formed into an ominous black cloud that engulfed the entirety of the villa.

Sssii! From within travelled noises, which made Leylin recall the decomposition process of a man eating plant.

The black clouds grew denser, finally shielding what was happening within.

However, there were the occasional sounds of the Bone Eating Flower which continuously waned and finally disappeared, only leaving behind decomposing sounds, which would make people cringe.

5 minutes later, the black smoke dissipated, revealing the villa from before again.

By this moment, the surface of the villa had been severely corroded, and it looked as if it was going to collapse any moment.

The Devil Vines and Bone Eating Flower had long since disappeared, leaving behind only a few remains.

“What a despotic spell! Cloud of Afterlife, a Rank 0 spell which only Level 3 Acolyte can muster. Each use costs 5 Spiritual Force and 5 Magic Power, but it is worth it!”

Leylin nodded his head approvingly.

With one use of Cloud of Afterlife, not only did the Devil Vines and Bone Eating Flower disappear, the villa had suffered from extreme corrosion, leaving behind only part of the defense, which could be said to no longer pose a threat to Leylin.

Moreover, the Cloud of Afterlife was a Shadow, Dark Element spell which was the least destructive. It was something Leylin specially chosen in order to destroy the spell formation on the villa, at the same time leaving behind the construction of the villa.

“Only that.... The villa seems to have been corroded, and cannot stay erect for much longer!”

Leylin walked forward and knocked on the wooden door. Crash! The wooden door immediately crumbled into many pieces and fell to the ground.

Chapter 74: Great Magus Serholm

“I must hurry!” Leylin strode into the villa.

“A.I. Chip! Scan the main structure of the villa!”

[Mission establishing, beginning scan....]

Previously, the A.I. Chip could not scan the blueprints of the villa due to the layer of spell formation and defensive measures on the surface of the villa. But, that was not the case now.

Very soon, a layer of light in the shape of a blue map appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes.

“En! There are two storeys in the villa. On the higher floor, it’s the bedroom and bathroom! The first floor would be the guestroom. As for the experiment lab, it is located underground! The entrance is built into the back of a wardrobe!”

Under the scan of the A.I. Chip, the interior of the villa was displayed in front of him fully.

“To the bedroom first!” Leylin rapidly ran up the second floor.

Gripping the yellow bronze handle, Leylin opened the large door

to the bedroom. A layer of dust immediately infiltrated his nose. The surface of Leylin's body automatically created a layer of black coloured light membrane, shielding him from the dust.

Leylin then scanned the area, "Everything is all neatly placed!"

The bedroom was very small, with only a bed, a table and a chair, and a closet.

Leylin opened the closet, "The clothes have all disappeared, it seems that the owner here has prepared to abandon this place!"

Although he had thought of this before, Leylin was still somewhat disappointed.

He immediately rummaged through the bedroom but found nothing of value. Even the drawers of the table were empty, and there was only some blank parchment paper in the corners of the room.

"These should be remnants of the diary or record book! A pity that there's nothing written on them!"

Leylin felt that it was somewhat a shame. His eyes suddenly flashed, "Diary! I got it!"

The yellow parchment paper was very old and seemed as if would break into many pieces. However, to Leylin, these few pieces of parchment paper were supreme treasures!

“A.I. Chip! Scan the traces on the parchment paper!”

Leylin ordered, and a layer of blue light was immediately projected in front of his eyes. As for the parchment paper, lines of red handwriting were intermittently surfacing.

“This is something that the Magus wrote on a piece of parchment paper, but traces of his handwriting were left on these pieces of parchment!

Leylin was somewhat elated. Magi would only use spells to appraise items, but there were spells that defended against such attempts. However they had absolutely no defences against Leylin’s previous world’s graphology, and he eventually found some clues.

The information on the parchment paper was extremely disorderly. Many characters were overlapping with one another, and even the A.I. Chip was unable to differentiate between them.

After putting together the scattered pieces, what little information Leylin gotten should have been this diary:

September 1st, clear. Extreme Night City is a very tranquil city, I hope I can carry out my experiments here peacefully....

December 5th, dark. Oh! Damn it! The experiment has failed yet again, as expected! The difficulty of synthesizing bloodlines has far

exceeded my expectations....

What remained was extremely vague, and even the dates could not be deciphered:

After reading Wayne's letter, I conducted a few more experiments. I have to admit, he was right, I was heading in the wrong direction all along, this is indeed some sorrowful news....

The experimental body has failed completely. As for what's left of the eggs, even if they could hatch, my plan has completely failed. Oh, my heavens....

There is nothing of value here anymore. Maybe I should go to the Dylan Gardens to have a look. Wayne said that his experiments have already achieved a few stages of success, this is a great piece of news for us....

The contents of the diary stopped here, it was a continuous record of a Magus' failure and ended in the abandonment of the lab.

Besides a person called Wayne from the Dylan Gardens, Leylin gained nothing whatsoever.

However, there were too many Wayne's, and as for Dylan Gardens, Leylin never heard of it before.

“Not right, wait a minute!”

Leylin's eyes suddenly flashed, and in the corner of the parchment paper, he discovered a name.

The faint red writing was extremely vague, hence, Leylin almost missed it earlier.

“Nor... Norco Curadu Sfar!”

“Norco Curadu Sfar!” Leylin's eyes widened, “Great Magus Serholm!”

“Could it be that the owner of this lab was the Great Magus Serholm?”

Norco Curadu Sfar was a legend of the South Coast! In the legends, not only was he an erudite scholar, he had obtained extremely outstanding results along the path of a Magus. He had even led the whole of the South Coast Magi to repel the countless advances of the subterranean people and marine creatures.

This kind of great Magus was the role model for all Magi in the South Coast.

Earlier in the market, the dishonest merchant who tried to sell Leylin the Lowian Academy Teachings had tried to pass off the original decrepit page as the writings of the Great Magus Serholm, but it was seen through by Leylin.

“A respected figure like this, his legacy would definitely be of value. A pity that the two storeys were left with nothing and there definitely would not be any legacy or things of the sort!”

Regret streaked across Leylin’s face, but he still memorised the contents on the parchment paper.

“I hope that there will be something to gain from the experiment lab!”

Leylin gave the bedroom one last disappointed glance before he puffed out a breath, and blew the parchment paper into bits.

Coming to the wardrobe on the first floor, originally, the in built wardrobe should have been stuck on the wall. However, due to a small crack, Leylin could now see the passage behind it.

This should be something that was done by the Mankestre Snake.

Leylin shifted away the emptied wardrobe, and the black passage appeared before him.

Pa! Leylin snapped, and a layer of light illuminated the area, dispelling the darkness and revealing a flight of steps that led downwards.

Leylin’s eyes flashed fervently as he walked down.

Clang!

The leather shoes and ground made a dull noise from friction.

Compared to the villa above, the underground space was more spacious, and was almost the size of 3 to 4 villas.

Criss-crossed walls littered the area, separating the underground lab into a few large areas.

Leylin continued down the passage, and from time to time, he could see the labelling of the areas.

An ancient handwriting was used. However, it had some relevance to the Byron language. As Leylin walked, he looked.

Data area, garden area, incubator area, potioning area, herbology area... Each and every special area appeared in front of Leylin's eyes.

After seeing the incubator area, Leylin's eyes flashed, and he walked in.

A ball of light always floated around him, illuminating the sight of the incubator area.

What initially entered Leylin's sight were many circular glass domes, but the glasses had already cracked, revealing many rotten

eggs of mysterious organisms.

Under the alert from the A.I. Chip that there were no signs of life around, Leylin put on a pair of gloves, and held a grey egg that resembled a granite stone in his hands.

[Scanning in progress, similarity level to the Mankestre Snake: 73.2%, Huge Wood Python: 34.5%, Huge Tree Lizard: 13.8%]

The A.I. Chip continuously projected the results of the scan.

“It seems like these are all the brothers and sisters of the half adult Mankestre Snake!” Leylin gasped as he saw the many dead eggs within the glass domes.

If they were all still alive, Leylin would most likely not be able to escape.

After some searching, Leylin discovered a strange incubating pool. On the surface of the glass ball, there was a circular hole that was cracked through, and the remnants of some egg shells.

“The Mankestre Snake from earlier should have been bred in this incubating pool....”

Leylin sized up the area and was unresigned as he continued

searching, finally obtaining nothing. He could only pick up a dead egg that looked like a stone and toss it.

Data area, garden area, potioneering area, herbology area...

Leylin looked over everything once. The Great Magus Serholm would have definitely spent a lot of time and effort on it. The set up in each area was extremely thorough.

However, when he left, he brought along everything with him. Leylin, who originally wished to get lucky, had now also completely tossed that notion away.

Apart from the few blank pieces of parchment paper in the bedroom, there was nothing that Leylin found.

“The final area! The dissecting room!”

Leylin wore a disappointed expression that he found difficult to mask, and walked into the room.

Clang!

The steel door boomed opened and a concentrated aura of dense negative energy permeated the air. Leylin could even hear the faint wails of countless souls.

“On the way of a Magus who seeks the truth, one can never avoid

spilling blood!” Leylin muttered the maxim of the Great Magus Serholm.

After sizing up the area, Leylin noticed that there were some traces of black blood on the white experiment table. He picked up some powder from it.

“A.I. Chip! Scan!”

[No surviving cells were detected! Due to various intense radiations, there are deficiencies and mutations in the fragments of the cells, unable to detect source!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“Fuck!” Leylin felt utter disappointment as he kicked the experiment table.

Towards Magi who loved explorations, nothing was more disappointing than devoting countless effort and energy to enter the vestiges of ancient times and returning empty handed.

Although the Alchemy diary could already be considered to be extremely beneficial to Leylin, compared to the Great Magus Serholm, that kind of loot was somehow inadequate.

This was the Great Magus Serholm!!! An official Magus that was

at least Rank 4!!!

But in his lab, Leylin gained nothing at all, which made him extremely vexed.

“Forget it! At least I still have the diary of that unlucky fellow. I did not suffer any loss. Moreover, this experiment could very well be a lab that the Great Magus Serholm used when he was a Rank 1 or 2 Magus. If not, I would have definitely not been able to enter....”

Suddenly, Leylin was rather glad.

If he had trespassed into the lab of the Great Magus Serholm when he was at his peak. and if there had been some curse laid out, Leylin certainly would have been unable to resist right now.

Bang!

As if kickstarting some kind of chain reaction by kicking the experiment table, a gust of wind blew past the ground, turned into a whirlwind, and coiled the dust up in the air.

“Eh?” Leylin’s face tightened, and his right hand extended into his waist pouch.

The cyclone grew larger and larger, before finally forming into a translucent human figure.

“How many years... How many years has it been already! I have finally caught a whiff of a living human!” The translucent figure seemed to gasp and revealed a vague elderly visage.

Chapter 75: Holding Captive

“A spirit body!”

Leylin’s pupils contracted.

The Magi were clueless as to the appearance of spirit bodies but most of them assumed that a spirit body was the external embodiment of a soul.

Also, many Magi were in the dark with regards to the formation of a spirit body.

It seemed that the creation of a spirit body required many coincidental encounters. Sometimes, even a regular human could turn into an evil spirit after death, yet even official Magi never had such things happen to them.

Moreover, spirit bodies were extremely rare. With regards to their research, even if the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had a large number of observations, they only slightly understood the behavior of spirit bodies.

As the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy only sought knowledge, Leylin managed to learn a little about spirit bodies through a few words mentioned by professors, so he wouldn’t be like others who might be frightened.

“Who are you?” Leylin asked warily as he retreated back by

several steps.

“Name?” The translucent spirit body shook its head, “I’ve forgotten that long ago!”

“Countless years have passed and I have been wandering here always, up to this day! I felt that an interesting fellow had trespassed into my lab, so I came out to have a look at you!”

Leylin’s eyes flashed, “So you are the owner of this lab! Accept my apologies, for interrupting you so presumptuously!”

Saying so, he gave a polite bow used between Magi and his gesture had no flaws.

The spirit body’s faint lips curled upwards, “I like little fellows with manners!”

He reached out his translucent hand, and a layer of light appeared in his hands, “You can obtain a great present from this magnificent wizard!”

“Really? Honestly, this is too good!”

Leylin seemed to be ‘ecstatic’ as he stepped several steps forward. Suddenly, a gob of green ball appeared and was shot out from Leylin’s hands, which passed the spirit body, directly landing on the experiment table behind.

Sssii! A large hole corroded through the experiment table.

“A physical attack has no effect?” Leylin’s turned solemn.

“Little fellow, what are you doing?” The spirit body smiled but it seemed to be more sinister from before.

“This is the magnificent Magus Roman’s inheritance, which can allow you to successfully advance into an official Magus!”

“Are you kidding me? You are just a spirit with a grievance that impersonated your owner!”

Leylin retreated several more steps and a purple potion appeared in his hands.

“I reckon that light in your hands is not anything good!”

Bang! The potion flew from his hands and let off an intense combustion. The purple smoke rose continuously, and under the engulfment of the purple mist, the layer of light in the spirit body’s hands dispersed, revealing a sinister looking visage that howled with unwillingness. It looked rather similar to the spirit body.

“A malicious, vengeful spirit who loves to invade the physical bodies of living humans!”

Leylin thought of some distant narration and exclaimed, “Vengeful spirit! You are a vengeful spirit!”

“Who knows?” The spirit body had a bloodthirsty smirk.

“The thing that really lured you out should be this book right?” Leylin waved an Alchemy diary book, which he retrieved from his robes.

“Indeed! This is something that belongs to me!” Seeing the black diary, the eyes of the spirit body seemed to be reminded of something.

“You are the corpse at the front door. During the exploration of this lab, you were killed by the Gnawing Slate. Your spirit was trapped by the spell formation, before finally turning into a vengeful spirit!”

Leylin summarized the series of events, as he already knew who the real owner of this lab was.

“An intelligent kid!” The spirit body toyed with its fingernails, “A pity that you will die here today!”

Whoosh!

Leylin only felt a light flashing by and tried to dodge, but he found several traces of blood on his chest.

“The smell of fresh blood!” Seeing the blood, the expression of the spirit body turned even more desirous and he placed his fingers in his mouth and licked them.

“What a quick movement! The naked eye cannot keep up with it!”

A blue light appeared from Leylin’s eyes, and the A.I. Chip calculated quickly.

“You won’t be able to escape! Surrender and become an offering of the magnificent Roman!” The vengeful spirit howled and charged forward again.

His fingernails sprung forward as if turning into a razor sharp blade.

Dang! A layer of light membrane appeared from Leylin’s body, shielding him from the force of the frantic attack.

Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion!

“I’ve caught you!” Leylin sneered.

Leylin could not entirely keep up with a spirit body, which travelled as fast as the wind. Even if the A.I. Chip could calculate its trajectory and movements, with Leylin’s physical abilities, he

could not follow it. Moreover, due to the illusory appearance of the spirit body, most physical attacks were of no use.

Thankfully, Leylin's potion— the Trevor's Revolving Shield Potion which he had concocted before— was the only defensive potion that acolytes had access to. There were even some suppression effects towards spirit bodies.

The hand, which was enveloped in light, directly grabbed hold of the right hand of the spirit body.

“Im...Impossible! How are you able to touch me?”

The spirit's face contorted and it howled as it struggled.

“Spirit bodies may be very mysterious to the acolytes of other academies, but it's a pity that you met me, who came from the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! Accept the fate of a failure!” Leylin's face was serene and he took out a black coloured crystal ball.

This was something that he had managed to obtain in the academy— a Confining Spirit Sphere, which was specifically used to capture and store spirit bodies.

Chi! After the black coloured crystal ball came into contact with the spirit body, glowing light radiated and a suction force appeared on its surface, which sucked the continuously howling spirit body directly into it.

Minutes later, nothing stood in front of Leylin anymore. The inside the black crystal ball had an extra-translucent figure in it; thus, the black crystal had a resemblance to [amber](#).

Amber, a gemstone that may have some fossil trapped in it.

Leylin heaved a sigh of relief. “Thankfully this old geezer is only a Level 3 Acolyte, and fortunately, I had the Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion and Confining Spirit Sphere. If not, I would have been in trouble today....”

Concerning spirit bodies, the strength of their soul would determine their might.

As for the meditation of magicians, it is the cultivation of Spiritual Force, a type of method to strengthen their soul.

There was once an official Magus who, when he transformed into a spirit body, actually retained his spell casting abilities, finally turning into a spirit body Magus.

If today he met with a spirit body that was an official Magus, Leylin would have had no chance at all of escaping.

Once a physical body is occupied, the soul will forever be connected to it.

Looking at the black crystal ball in his hands, Leylin thought and then added several more seals on it, then placed it into a small black sack. He even tightened the mouth of the sack and hung it on

his waist.

After doing so, Leylin searched the entirety of the villa. After confirming that there were no more oversights, he left the place with extreme regrets.

“What a pity!”

Leylin looked at the huge black granite boulder behind him, and without further hesitation, he rode a handsome blade steed and rapidly left the area,

Boom!

When he left, the huge black granite boulder exploded loudly, destroying the whole area and turning into ashes.

Half a month later, in the experiment lab, Leylin closed the black diary after reading its last page.

“I never thought that the synthesis of a Magic Artifact as depicted by Lowian Academy Teachings, or the ancient formula of the Tears of Mary, would include the aspect of souls....”

Leylin had only heard of this information vaguely from Kroft back in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, but he had never researched it on his own.

“I’m afraid that... I can only adopt the crudest method, which is to research and observe from various trial and error experiments. Also, I have to use the A.I. Chip to gather data.... In this aspect, perhaps Viscount Jackson, in his capacity as a city lord, could help me”

Thinking of which, Leylin took out a black crystal ball from the corner of his lab.

The crystal ball was originally placed on an altar with mysterious runes scribbled over it and there were 3 white, lit candles that surrounded it.

Leylin knocked on the surface of the crystal ball.

Dong!

A wave suddenly erupted, and the mist in the crystal ball dispersed, revealing a vague fuzzy figure.

This figure only had the upper half of its body, and its lower limbs were replaced by the continuously swirling white mist. As for its countenance, it was that of an old geezer.

This old geezer’s expression was extremely rapt and fright permanently lingered on his face, as if it was a small worm that was solidified within amber.

Looking at this vengeful spirit, Leylin suddenly laughed and

chanted an incantation.

“Where is this? Release me quickly....” Suddenly, the solidified contents in the crystal ball turned to life again. The old geezer howled. Although his face was still filled with vehemence and craziness, it could not conceal his fear and helplessness!

“How is it, Mister Roman? How is the feeling of having your thoughts frozen?”

Leylin propped the ball in front of him.

“It’s you!” The vengeful spirit head-butted the surface of the crystal ball, but it was to no avail.

Seeing Roman, who was like a helpless mosquito, wildly charge against the interior walls of the crystal ball, Leylin chuckled and flicked his finger at the surface of the crystal ball.

Bang! Roman, who was inside, seemed to have been struck by a steel hammer and collapsed onto the ground, completely dispirited.

“How is it? Now, hurry up and tell me everything you know about the experiment and your life. I may consider letting you off after that!”

Leylin’s face was impassive.

“Dream on!” Roman put on a resolute expression.

“Then I have no choice!” Leylin shrugged his shoulders and placed a fiery red rock beside the crystal ball.

“Arghhh!” Flames immediately appeared on Roman’s body, as he wailed pitifully.

“In the aspect of adding suffering to a spirit body, I have some skills! Moreover, in this crystal ball, you cannot even commit suicide. This kind of torture will last for a very long time! A veerrrrry loooooongg tiiiiime....”

Leylin dragged his last words to the extreme, which would make someone who listened to it want to sleep.

“Be... A Bewitching Charm? Dream on!” Roman, who was squeezed into the crystal ball, gritted his teeth.

“That is some unexpected mental fortitude!”

Leylin’s brows furrowed, “It seems like I have to cast it once a day in the future, to make this vengeful spirit’s life force reduce greatly....”

The life force was the foundation of vengeful spirits. When the life force of vengeful spirits is weakened, their intelligence will

often lower, turning into a retard.

Under the current circumstances, adding on to the bewitching charm, there is a great chance of success.

Even if it did not drive Roman crazy, there shouldn't be any issues at all. Leylin, as a Potions Master, had confidence in preserving Roman's life force before it dissipated. By prolonging Roman's life force, and repeatedly torturing him, with perseverance, Leylin would obtain the information he needed.

As for what Leylin had now, it was time. Time to toy with Roman slowly!

Chapter 76: Experiment And Precipitate

In the blink of an eye, it was already late autumn.

The arable farms were all brimming with golden yellow ear wheat. The windmills in the distance were continuously whirling and the earth seemed to be joyous from the abundance.

Dang Dang Dang!

Travelling on the road in the middle of the farms was a group of horse carriages and armoured Knights with the strength and robustness that far exceeded those of ordinary men. On the armour on their shoulder plates was an insignia of a crescent moon— this was the insignia belonging to the City Lord of Extreme Night City, Viscount Jackson!

Upon seeing the horse carriages, the farmers hurriedly avoided the road, taking off their caps and bowing.

In the middle of the Knights and troops, were several horse carriages that were veiled with black cloth. As these carriages advanced, sounds of clanging metal chains were produced from it which gave off an ominous feeling.

“Look at this direction! It seems to be headed to the villa! This should be the third group in this month!” A farmer with a brown beard muttered to himself.

“Old Johan! What are you looking at?” A farmer at the other side called out.

“Those horse carriages! I keep having the feeling that something is amiss. Previously when the wind blew, I saw the figures inside the horse carriage....” Old John’s brows furrowed.

“So what? It might be that the lord of our manor has started to purchase female slaves on a whim! You know what, our kind-hearted yet lazy manor lord, is still in his teens!”

The farmer beside Old John supported him and grumbled, “It’s better for us not to bother with the matters of these people. Let’s go! Rose Pub recently has new rum....”

Both farmers’ silhouette disappeared gradually in the distance.

As for the other side, the procession of horse carriages stopped outside of Leylin’s manor. Greem and Fraser have long since been waiting for them.

“According to the City Lord’s orders, the ‘goods’ have arrived!” The leader of the Knights peeled his cloak open, revealing a hideous face littered with scars.

“Open the prisoners’ carriage!” With the leader’s command, the subordinates hurriedly opened the carriages carrying the prisoners, revealing the chained prisoners within.

These prisoners only wore coarse armour and these had holes and were covered in grime. They were all of different stature. Short, tall, thin and fat. However, the common similarity is the killing aura masked in their expressionless eyes.

Knights such as Greem and Fraser were extremely sensitive to killing intent. Only people who have truly committed homicide would have this aura.

“There are 5 men. They are all heinous criminals. Every legal case regarding them is enough to execute the capital punishments a dozen times.... Of course, the City Lord has long since approved of their death sentence. In the eyes of the law, they are already ‘dead’....”

The Knight leader smirked, and his face which was littered with scars turned even more grotesque. “For whatever reason, even for the sake of those innocent victims, never let them go easily....”

“Their fate is all in the hands of Young Master!” After receiving the criminals, Greem said, “However, we can guarantee that not one of them will walk out of this manor....”

After getting a satisfactory response the Knight leader brought his troops and the empty prison carriages out of the villa.

As for Greem, he forcefully brought the 5 criminals under the basement of the manor.

The torch in the darkness, the tightly locked door, and the dry stifling underground passage gave all these criminals an eerie feeling. However, with the two Knights, Greem and Fraser, they had no chance to resist.

Greem led the way familiarly, bringing the 5 criminals each into different prison. Afterwards, he came to a newly tunneled experiment lab and waited by the side.

Although there were thick walls, and the surroundings had torches which were scorching bright, Greem still felt his hairs stand on end, and cold sweat trickled down his body.

As a slave Knight, he knew part of Leylin's identity. He knew even more about the darkness and the terror behind those walls!

“That place is practically a hell!” The first time Greem was summoned inside by Leylin, he had blurted his thoughts. Afterwards, this fearless Knight had puked for an entire night.

Half an hour passed. For Greem, time seemed to have crawled like half a year long. Especially when the indistinct screams that occasionally seeped through the sturdy walls with the impression of piercing his ear drum!

May the heavens have pity! Although Greem was no good person, and his hands too were covered with blood, the moaning and wails behind the stone walls were something that a human was incapable of producing anymore.

Creak! The sturdy steel door swung open and Leylin strode out from it. On his body were traces of blood stains.

“A pity that the experimental body was not strong enough and was unable to endure the effects of the spell! I hope the next few experimental bodies will be more durable....”

To research on souls, Leylin did not have any readily available ingredients. So he could only adopt the crudest method which was to continuously gather data through experiments.

“Young Master!” Greem hurriedly bowed. “Today the City Lord’s Castle has sent another 5 people over and they are all inside their cells....”

“Very well!” Leylin nodded his head.

Although he was a Level 3 Acolyte, before advancing into an official Magus, Leylin did not have enough assurance for challenging those self-proclaimed “Light” Magi, so some things still had to be concealed.

Only Greem and Fraser were handling the reception of goods. Apart from them, Anna, too, knew a little about it. Other than them, even Fayern and Old Welker, the housekeeper, knew nothing of Leylin’s deeds.

Although they had some faint surmises, but Leylin always disposed of those useless ‘ingredients’ by cremating them with

medicinal powder. Under no evidence, even if anyone had suspicions, they could not do anything towards him.

“This is the limitation of strength! The official Magi in the academy can saunter through slave markets to purchase slaves as ingredients. They could even lure and cheat acolytes but nobody could punish them! However, I am just a lowly acolyte and all by myself. I still have to mind my reputation....”

Leylin stroked his chin.

“A.I. Chip, how is the gathering of data on experimental bodies today?”

Leylin asked inwardly.

[The Spiritual Force of the experimental subject has already been discovered to have 23 abnormal cerebral fluctuations and within the cerebrum were 45 hidden locations....]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“Using the prisoners as living subjects and carrying out experiments to obtain research and data on the spirit body, seemed like it’s doable!”

Leylin nodded his head, “It’s just that the amount is still too

little....”

Turning back, he looked at Greem who seemed to have been uneasy right from the start, “You did well, take your leave now!”

“As you wish, Master!” Greem bowed and heaved a secret sigh of relief as he hurriedly ran away.

As a regular human, naturally he was somewhat conflicted with these issues, not to mention the limitations set from the slave training. But Leylin’s strength had far surpassed Greem’s. Hence, he could only find it difficult to bear but did not dare to display any reluctance.

As his owner, Leylin naturally had seen through this point.

“After all, he is just a regular human and such occurrences are to be expected. As long as he is still obeying orders, the others I need not care about....” Leylin recalled Greem’s expression for a moment, before completely forgetting him. His black robes swirled about him as he disappeared into the underground lab.

“Leylin, my friend, we meet again!”

His green hair trailing the ground, Langford looked at Leylin and sincerity was shown on his face.

Ever since the previous incident between Leylin and Langford, they actually had traded a few more times. They had even

established a friendship and became pretty good friends.

How things turned out like this was because Leylin discovered that when Langford was not crazy, his character was rather good. Moreover, his supplies of goods were constant and the prices in the Brey Canyon were cheaper than other magicians'.

Between magicians, benefits are the only constant. As for other things, most of them could be forsaken.

“Langford! This time, I require the goods urgently! Have a look!”

Leylin nodded his head as he handed over a yellow parchment paper with scribbles on it.

“I seldom see this side of you! Let me take a look!” Langford took the parchment paper and immediately ground his teeth.

“The faeces of the Kosh Bird, Stellar Alloy.... These items are all connected to the aspect of souls and are not cheap items!”

Dong! A small sack was immediately slammed onto Langford's table.

After loosening the ropes around it, glittering Magic Crystals were revealed within it.

“Do not worry about Magic Crystals, these are the deposit. I will

make up for the difference later with potions!” Leylin spoke in a rich and overbearing manner.

“That’s right! With your ability, Magic Crystals are only a small issue!”

Langford eyes glowed, and immediately kept the Magic Crystal sack into his robes, “The Kosh Bird is on the verge of extinction. I heard that some people had chanced upon it before in the Black Death Mountain Plains. As for Stellar Alloy, I have a piece of it here....”

Langford immediately rummaged through the shelves behind him, after which he opened a small black box.

In the centre of the red satin interior was a silver-coloured rock with blue spots

“The ingredients that you need, Stellar Alloy, Flowerless Leaves... I have one of each here. As for the others, maybe you could look further within the canyon....”

Langford hurriedly piled the items together, and calculated the final value, “785 Magic Crystals!”

“Alright!” Leylin stroked his chin somewhat grudgingly, “I will go for a look at the market. Also, you have to keep a lookout for the items I requested and purchase them when you can!”

“Alright!” Once Langford agreed, his countenance changed and the green hair continuously shrank, very soon reaching the waist area from the legs.

“Lea... Leave now!” Langford’s face contorted, and one of his eyes was already bloodshot.

Leylin turned around, until he left the cave for a distance before a howling sound travelled to his ears.

“An intermittent illness like this is really scary....” Leylin’s footstep did not stop and directly headed towards the depths of the canyon.

“Hurry, look! Langford has acted up again....”

“Should we inform the protectors?”

“I’m afraid there won’t be of much use. Hehe, not long later, Langford will be chased out from this place.”

At the same moment, from both sides of the cave, many acolytes who wore pointed hats looked at the direction of the howling sound. Expressions of anxiety, indifference and schadenfreude were seen across various faces.

After being busy for some time, Leylin emerged from the Brey Canyon. On his back was an additional black backpack stuffed full of various ingredients.

Leylin turned around to look at the Brey Canyon, before riding his dark horse and left.

Chapter 77: News From The Academy

Inside a spacious and bright room was a full-length mirror.

The mirror was taller than a person and was ornamented along its sides with black leaves which contrasted with the white birch wood. A large variety of different colored gems were also embedded along its edges, making it look extremely extravagant.

At this moment, a youth wearing a swallow-tail coat was standing in front of this mirror. Behind him were a few maids, who were busy straightening out their master's attire.

After tidying up, the youth waved his hands, sending the maids away, leaving him alone in the room.

This youth judged his reflected figure— a medium-height build with a slim stature. He was brown haired and somewhat pale-skinned. His countenance could be described as delicate, but the shining luster in both his eyes indicated he had a very active mind.

“Unknowingly, I have already turned 17!”

Leylin looked at himself in the mirror and spoke with a hint of melancholy.

Time was the most incisive weapon. It turned babies into old people and created barren deserts by drying up seas. Even if a person was a Magus, they could only slightly prolong their lives.

But even if they could live for several thousand years, they could still not evade the slow corrosion of time.

Over a year had passed ever since Leylin returned from his previous exploration.

“No! I must fight the eternal curse of time and seek immortality. Only then would I be deserving of the fate of having being transported to this world!”

Leylin’s eyes turned a fiery black as if a deep magnificent flame was burning within them.

“Master! The City Lord’s horse carriage is here!” Outside the door, Anna’s voice could be heard.

“Let him wait for a while, I’ll be coming over shortly.”

Leylin faced the mirror and finished sorting out his bearings, before picking up a short black cane and leaving the room.

Deng Deng!

The black horse carriage flew rapidly across the street and, after seeing the insignia of the City Lord Castle; the citizens avoided it and made way. They all sent respectful and envious gazes to the horse carriage.

In the cabin, there was only Leylin. Currently, this youth was lying comfortably against a velvety goose feather cushion. His hand laid on its side, revealing a strange pendant on his palm.

The pendant was strikingly similar to the silver cross. On its surface were a few red and blue diamonds, which glittered in the light, giving off a faint glow.

As Leylin stared at this pendant, a satisfied expression crossed his face.

“According to the A.I. Chip’s calculations, with the Stellar Alloy as the centerpiece and the support of various precious alloys that I have obtained during my travels, this prototype of the Magic Artifact has already been perfectly synthesized.”

This pendant artifact was something that Leylin had synthesized according to the Magic Artifact section of the Lowian Academy Teachings.

3 years ago Leylin had managed to buy the decrepit page of the Lowian Academy Teachings, having the A.I. Chip slowly decipher the contents within.

The earlier portions of the teachings were only suitable for acolytes, with many travels and adventures recorded down. If not, Leylin could never have purchased the page at an extremely low price.

Leylin's luck was not bad. After the A.I. Chip finished deciphering, he obtained a method to synthesize a low-grade Magic Artifact.

Fallen Star Pendant — This was the name of the Magic Artifact recipe he had obtained. According to the Lowian Academy Teachings, this Fallen Star Pendant, while a low-grade Magic Artifact, was of the rare defensive nature. Compared to a few attack type Magic Artifacts, its value was naturally much higher. Even an official Magus might be interested in it.

After having to see the materials needed and the process, Leylin had immediately decided that he had to synthesize the Fallen Star Pendant.

Although the spells of acolytes are rather destructive, their low defense capabilities have always been an issue.

Only by turning into an official Magus, and being able to form an innate defensive spell, can there be a spell projecting a force field that constantly protected the body. Only then, could someone be considered to be an awe-inspiring Magus.

As for acolytes, they could lose their lives at any time from sneak attacks.

The few acolytes who had entered the withering woods with Leylin previously were the best examples of this case.

Although they were able to cast destructive spells, due to the Great Mankestre Snake, they had all perished due to the lack of defensive spells. Only Murphy was fortunate enough to stay alive, but that was due to Leylin saving him.

Once he had synthesized the Fallen Star Pendant, coupled with a couple of defensive potions, Leylin's defence would be comparable to a fraction of the defence that a Magus had.

Furthermore, the Fallen Star Pendant's defence force field would be activated immediately. For instance, as long as the opponent's attack power does not exceed the threshold of the Fallen Star Pendant and before it's energy was completely depleted, Leylin's defence would be like that of a sturdy turtle shell. As long as the Fallen Star Pendant was active, nothing would happen to Leylin.

"Fortunately, there was a magician market near Extreme Night City, if not I wouldn't have been able to find so many precious ingredients so quickly!"

Leylin somehow felt glad for that.

After smashing and grinding most of the Magic Crystals he had, as well as adding all of the ingredients from the Great Mankestre Snake, he managed to create this prototype of a pendant.

"I have basically consumed all of my expendable resources. According to the Lowian Academy Teachings, this is only an incomplete product. The core of the Fallen Star Pendant has already been completed. What's left is the final step...."

Glancing at the Fallen Star Pendant in his hands he saw that the silver cross glittered and glowed with a wide range of different hues. On its surface were inscribed mysterious patterns, and altogether it seemed like a mystical art piece.

“As for the final ingredient, I have it with me already. I need to only wait for the opportune moment before I can initiate the spirit awakening for the Fallen Star Pendant!”

Leylin gripped the Fallen Star Pendant tightly and kept it on his shirt.

“As for the Tears of Mary, this ancient formula is really difficult to comprehend. Even after a lot of experiments and obtaining large amounts of data on spirit bodies, I still don’t understand anything from looking at this formula!”

Leylin appeared downcast, and his thoughts spun rapidly, “Could it be that my conjecture is wrong? What if this formula has nothing to do with spirit bodies....”

“Halt!” The coachman’s voice travelled from the front. The horse carriage jerked, as it came to a stop.

“Sir Leylin! The City Lord’s Castle is just ahead,” reported the coachmen, respectfully.

Leylin shook his head and organized his inner thoughts as he

walked out of the carriage's door.

The City Lord's Castle was still the same — just as imposing and dignified as before. Rows of guards on both sides of the entrance were standing facing each other, and their gaze never wavered, appearing formidable.

“Viscount Jackson is rather intelligent!” Ever since the withering woods incident, he had pretended to be heavily injured and allowed the news to travel out. After his enemies confirmed the news and began to gather in cahoots for an attack, he caught them all at once lightning quick. He cut off all of their heads and their blood overflowed into the moat. From then on, all of Extreme Night City has been extremely quiet....”

“Leylin! My brother!”

Viscount Jackson had long since waited at the main door. Upon seeing Leylin, he immediately went forward to receive him.

Viscount Jackson had witnessed Leylin's strength first hand. Not to mention that Leylin was Viscount Jackson's lifesaver. If not for Leylin, Viscount Jackson would have long since become prey for the Great Mankestre Snake.”

“City Lord,” said Leylin, as he nodded his head.

Viscount Jackson grabbed Leylin's hands in a cordial manner. After bringing Leylin for a stroll around his castle's garden, he

then brought Leylin to a private study room.

Within the privacy of the castle, Viscount Jackson finally revealed a worrisome expression.

“My brother Leylin! Last time you had requested for 50 men, but I am simply unable to provide you with that many.... I have already sent all the criminals from all of my jails to your place. Also, I have even sent you cheats and thieves whose crimes do not warrant a death sentence. However, it is still too far from the number you requested....”

“It was like this?” Leylin nodded his head, and sat on the sofa, entering into deep thought.

Extreme Night City could barely be considered as a medium-sized city. Their residents would not exceed 100,000 people. For Viscount Jackson, providing Leylin with a few prisoners meant for the death row was still within his means. However, as time passed, the number of death row criminals became less and less, yet Leylin’s request only kept increasing. So now, he could no longer fulfill the requests of Leylin.

“As you know,” continued Viscount Jackson while Leylin was in deep thought, “I am only a City Lord. My noble status is only that of a Viscount. For individual death sentences, I may still be able to decide on them. However, once it exceeds a certain threshold, I have no choice in the matter. After all, there are still laws presiding over the dukedom....”

Viscount Jackson waved his hands, and his eyes flashed, “Unless there is a war happening at the moment, if 50 or 100 people disappeared at once, it would definitely incite the wrath of the masses!”

“War!!!”

Leylin was startled, but very soon his startled appearance turned into a frosty smirk. This was indeed a good chance to collect samples.

However, Viscount Jackson chose to mention it at this time, so it was very likely that he had already thought of a plan.

“Regarding this, I...” As Leylin wanted to speak further on the matter, his chest pocket suddenly vibrated as a crow-like ‘caw’ sounded. Immediately Leylin’s expression changed.

“Is there something wrong?” Viscount Jackson asked with a ‘concerned’ look.

“It’s.... It’s nothing; I’ve received news from a friend!” Leylin reached his hands into his chest, and the cawing stopped immediately. His countenance also resumed its previous tranquility.

However, Leylin lost interest in speaking any further. He hurriedly exchanged a few more words with Viscount Jackson before bidding farewell.

Although something was troubling Viscount Jackson, seeing Leylin, who became absent-minded towards the end, he still did not say what was on his mind.

After Leylin came out of the castle, he hopped onto the horse carriage and rushed back to the manor.

“I actually received news from the academy at a time like this” According to the news, the war of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had already reached the peak of its intensity, where the victor and loser could be determined at any given moment.

As Leylin was an acolyte who was sent out on a mission, the academy had given him items with which they could contact him. There were also various items for contact purposes, with a ‘single-use’ effect, sent with him. This way, they were able to get the most updated news of the school during critical times.

“Right now, the news given would most likely determine the winner and loser. The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s strength is limited, and there are two other factions of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s strength opposing it, so the chances of winning are slim,” mused Leylin, as he had a good grasp of the current predicament of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

“Unless some external faction has stepped forward to mediate, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy will definitely take a huge loss this time, and may even result in being disbanded....”

Leylin carried a solemn expression as he stepped into his secret lab.

Chapter 78: Arrangements

The shadow of a mahogany circular table could be seen under the dim glow of the lantern.

The four legs were elongated in the projection and when projected on the walls, it looked like a beast with four limbs, making it seem ominous.

Leylin stood in front of the table, and his shadow, too, was elongated.

A bunch of black scrolls were placed on the mahogany wood table. On the surface of each of the scrolls was a picture of a crow. At this moment, the crow seemed to have come alive and cawed continuously, giving off a noise that would terrify people.

“No matter what, I have to look at the contents within!”

Leylin made up his mind, “Even if it was a trap, which contains some sort of tracing spell inside, I still have enough time to escape!”

Even if that was the case, Leylin still gripped the Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion — that he had just brewed — tightly in his hands.

After which, with a solemn voice, Leylin spoke in the Byron language, “Open in the name of Leylin Farlier!”

Caw Caw Caw! The black crow cried, and its figure twisted. Many black lines converged, forming the image of a black skull.

Leylin picked a red crystal from his robes and tossed it into the skull's mouth.

Crunch! Crunch! The black skull immediately flew out from the paper and devoured the red crystal.

Puff! After finishing its meal, the black skull exploded, and the scroll shuddered violently. It started to burn at the bottom, where a green-coloured flame was seen.

The greenish flame then formed many characters in mid-air.

Leylin's eyes shifted. These green characters were a kind of secret code, which outsiders would not understand. But he has learnt its corresponding encryption and decryption back at Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

Under the green-coloured characters was a bright red stamp, with a distinguished name written below it in the Byron language. There even was an image of a black snake which crawled out from a skull.

“Even the chairman's seal has appeared -- it seems like this news is not a fake!”

Leylin's expression became volatile upon seeing the fluctuating characters.

Some time later, after the flame finished burning, the green characters disappeared into the air, leaving behind a pile of grey ashes.

Leylin sighed and furrowed his brows.

“They actually sent the highest order -- asking all acolytes, who are working on missions outside, to rush back to the academy immediately!”

“Furthermore, they have also set severe punishments. Those who do not make it back to the academy within 3 months, will immediately be labelled as a traitor, and be subjected to the academy's disciplinary team's execution!”

“I'm afraid that I have to go back this time!” Leylin muttered.

As to whether it was a trap set by an enemy, Leylin was not at all worried.

First of all, Leylin was only a lowly acolyte. The enemy would not go through such painstaking means for him. Also, the chairman of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was a legendary figure. He was, at the least, a Rank 2 Magus. Even if Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was defeated, his personal seal would never land in the hands of the enemy.

“Abyssal Bone Forest Academy” Leylin sighed and thought of Kroft, Bicky, Nyssa and the rest, wondering how they have been.

Previously when Leylin made a hasty decision to leave, it was indeed rather selfish of him. However, his strength was not even likened to that of an ant in front of the two academies, so he could not think of a better way.

“I’d never imagined that after 3 years, I will finally be returning!”

Leylin suddenly ordered, “A.I. Chip, bring forth my stats now!”

[Beep! Leylin Farlier, Level 3 Acolyte, Knight. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 3.3, Vitality: 3.7, Spiritual Force: 13.1, Magical Power: 13 - (Magical Power is in synchronisation with Spiritual Force). Status: Healthy]

More than a year had passed, and the modified Azure Potion, even for a Level 3 Acolyte, had a very beneficial effect. It managed to bring Leylin’s Spiritual Force up by another 3 points.

His body’s resistance towards the medicine, however, had now reached its limits. Drinking more of the Azure Potion would no longer have any effect.

Raising his Spiritual Force for the next few years would be

impossible for Leylin unless he were to concoct a new type of Spiritual Force medicine.

“After Level 3 Acolyte, it will be the realm of an official Magus!” Leylin muttered, “Advancing from Level 3 Acolyte to official Magus, there will be a huge bottleneck. The difficulty is much higher than that of advancing from a Level 2 to Level 3 Acolyte.”

It seemed like all of the factions in the Magus World deliberately controlled the information regarding of official Magus. Even if Leylin were to fork out huge amounts of Magic Crystals, he would not be able to retrieve much.

The previous, harrowing incident of advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte suddenly surfaced on Leylin’s mind.

“The higher ups in the Magus World have strictly kept the information regarding Magus advancement highly confidential. No matter how genius a wandering magician may be, as long as they don’t join a faction, they will never be able to obtain knowledge of advancing. This is to keep the lowest tier from resisting and creating a rebellion and to maintain the ruling.

Leylin, too, had experienced the evil consequences of advancing without prior knowledge. If not for the A.I. Chip, he would have died without even leaving behind a corpse.

“Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! I have to return once and obtain knowledge of advancing into an official Magus.

This was the only place where Leylin knew he could obtain information more easily. As for markets and whatnot, they were completely not worth considering.

The path of a Magus would be covered with thorns. One misstep would result in an irreversible consequence.

Last time, Leylin took a risk and advanced to the Level 3 Acolyte, but because of the lack of guidance from the academy and his mentor, he could only rely on the A.I. Chip to simulate. In the end, he met with two unexpected situations. If not for the A.I. Chip's immense capabilities, coupled with a little luck, Leylin would never have been able to advance that easily, and that too without any side effects.

“Only that...I have to reconsider the arrangements for my subordinates!”

Leylin stroked his chin, “Maybe, arranging for a backup plan here won't be a bad idea after all”

“Give out the orders, I wish to join the subordinates for tonight's dinner!”

After exiting the secret lab, Leylin instructed Anna.

“Yes, Young Master!” Leylin was on the solitary side, and he usually left the daily chores and trifle things to Anna, Greem and the others, while he holed himself up in the experiment lab all day.

He also rarely left the manor, so giving out an order suddenly did startle Anna. However, she was a quick-witted woman, so she did not ask much. After curtsying, she retreated while displaying her beautiful curves in front of Leylin.

In the manor, naturally there were halls large enough which could accommodate the master to have a meal with his subordinates.

The hall was constructed with large red rocks, the windowsill was rather small, and the sunlight could only dimly light up the place. However, at the centre, a silver rack with hundreds of candles lit solved that problem completely.

In the centre of the large hall, a long red table was placed. The attendants and kitchen staff were shifting the huge chairs with backrest, which caused squeaky noises. They also laid a thick, white cloth on the table, and arranged silver forks and spoons, plates and other cutleries.

When it was time to eat, the table was already filled with many delicacies. At the centre was a barbecued mutton. Around the golden yellow barbecue meat, there were many purple and red fruits. It complemented the combination of dishes and was a tantalising display.

Leylin immediately sat at the most respected position and looked at the group in front of him.

Immediately, to the left and right sides of Leylin, were Fraser and

Greem respectively. As Knights and subordinates who had followed Leylin from the earliest, their positions were naturally of the highest. After them were housekeeper Old Welker and Roran Hawks Mercenary Group's leader, Fayern.

As for Anna, she awaited behind Leylin silently, like a dutiful serving maid. However, all the people present did not dare think that her status was just that of a maid.

Everyone knew that Anna was exceptionally favoured by this Young Master. Not only could she see Leylin regularly, but she even held the key to the gold vault! It incited a few, feeble grumbles from Old Welker, but Leylin did not care.

After Leylin had purchased the land here, Fayern had moved his whole family over, and turned into a truthfully loyal subordinate of Leylin.

After which it was Roran Hawks Mercenary Group. The contract with them matured not long ago. Half of the mercenaries continued to stay on under the generous conditions that Leylin had provided.

Many others sat on the long table, but Leylin was only familiar with these few. The others merely looked familiar to Leylin, but Leylin knew of their faces and names, which he could remember by relying on the A.I. Chip.

Leylin never bothered about the trifles of regular livelihood. The pathway to being a Magus already expended a huge amount of his

concentration. He absolutely could not allocate any of his concentration on other matters.

Of course, Leylin's outward mannerisms were similar to that of many magicians. It also fit with how regular humans expected from magicians.

In the hearts of all the people on the South Coast, magicians were a group of people who wielded mysterious powers, but they were extremely solitary. They often resided in dark woods or concealed marshes. Only when they needed ingredients and other items, would they leave their dwelling.

“Young Master!”

The masses around the long table stood up and bowed.

Ding! Leylin used the silver spoon and tapped on the glass in front of him, giving off a crisp noise.

“Everyone! By calling you all out here today, is because I have something to announce to everyone!” Leylin's eyes swept the crowd. As of now, his Spiritual Force had already reached 13.1, and the mysterious gaze of his eyes was awe-inspiring; it was as if his eyes had been chiseled from the highest grade jewels. Anyone who was looked at by him would experience a sharp pain in their eyes, and tears would involuntarily leak out.

Even if it was Greem or Fraser, they could only bow their heads

low at this moment.

“Please give your orders, Young Master!”

“I will leave for a period of time, and there will be no set date on returning. When I am not around, the medicinal shop and daily matters of the manor would all be decided by Anna, Greem and Fraser.”

Leylin looked at the masses below him and said slowly.

“What?” A bout of commotion sparked, and immediately the group whispered fervently to each other, as they used strange gazes to look at the trio of Anna, Greem and Fraser.

Greem and Fraser could tolerate being the focus of numerous eyes. However, as a woman, Anna was somewhat uneasy as she twisted and clutched at her dress.

“Silence!” Leylin knocked on the silver glass again, and the crowd turned silent.

“From today onwards, the words from those 3 would be the same as mine. Any decision of theirs must be completely obeyed and carried out by you.”

“We obey!” Although Leylin did not usually bother himself with many matters, the imposing aura coming from him was extremely immense. There were also rumours flying around that he was part

of the Mysterious Entity, which made his subordinates' reverence towards him even greater.

Chapter 79: Tidying Up

“Anna, Greem, Fraser, you three come to my study room together after dinner!”

Seeing that his subordinates did not have any objections, Leylin nodded his head and said, “For now, everyone please enjoy yourself!”

The group nodded their heads, returned to their positions, and sat down. The sound of clanging cutlery continuously rang.

Ever since Leylin had issued his orders, the hall was much more silent than before. Although the dinner was sumptuous, the masses seemed to have something weighing down on their hearts.

After dinner, Leylin received the trio which knew of his magician identity.

Greem and Fraser wore leather armour, which looked extremely imposing. Anna still wore a low cut blouse, and appeared even more seductive.

“You guys know that I am a magician. Right now, I am about to embark on a journey, and due to some reasons, I can only keep you guys here....”

Leylin sat behind the desk, speaking solemnly to the three of them.

“The orders outside earlier were only for the others to see. From now onwards, Greem and Fraser, you must treat Anna the same way you treat me, do you understand?”

“We understand!” Greem and Fraser nodded their heads. Compared to the rest, they knew how terrifying this master of theirs was and had no objections towards Leylin’s orders.

After sending Greem and Fraser away, the room was only left with Anna and Leylin.

“Young...Young Master!” Tears welled up in Anna’s eyes.

“The Mandara Flower’s essence on your body, I have already created an antidote for it. Also, take these!” Towards his own women, Leylin was much gentler.

Saying so, Leylin handed over some potions and a parchment paper over to Anna.

“This is....” Anna opened the parchment paper to have a look, and she became startled.

“These are letters of authority. You will be managing all of my establishments in Extreme Night City. Furthermore, if I don’t return within ten years, all of these will be transferred over to your name!”

Leylin crossed his fingers, “Furthermore, Murphy and Viscount Jackson are witnesses to these procedures! If you meet with any trouble in the future, you can seek their aid!”

These worldly possessions, Leylin could have as many as he wanted. Naturally he would not mind giving them to Anna as a backup plan for himself.

Moreover, even if he played this chess piece wrongly, there wasn't much to be regretful about.

After all, right now, Leylin was only an acolyte in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. According to the academy's rules, acolytes are not allowed to bring their followers or maids into the academy compounds.

Since these are things which he had to eventually let go of, naturally, Leylin's heart did not ache for them.

“Also, this is the desert scorpion sting, which is a tool specially used to control Greem and Fraser. You must keep them well....”

Leylin handed over a red box to Anna.

“No!” Anna bit her lips, before finally pouncing forward and hugging both of Leylin's legs. “Young Master, don't chase Anna away! Anna wants to be by Young Master's side no matter what she has to do, alright?”

The young lady held onto Leylin's legs and tears as bright as pearls slid off of her beautiful face.

Her warm and mildly shuddering body wrapped itself around Leylin's legs. One could see that Anna had mustered extreme courage to speak these words.

Leylin looked at Anna with a touch of gentleness in his eyes. He reached his right hand out and stroked the young lady's hair and back.

"I'm very sorry Anna. The place I have to go is extremely dangerous for you...."

"But...." Anna lifted her face filled with tears as if wanting to say something else.

"Don't mess around, listen!" Suddenly, Leylin's face hardened.

Seeing her master act this way, the deeply ingrained pain and suffering for disobeying a master's orders surfaced in her mind. After all, Anna had undergone slave training. Although these were the methods of the slave traders, it was etched right into Anna's soul itself.

"Yes, Young Master!" Anna stopped her crying and kept the scroll and box. She only looked at Leylin, the same way as a cat that had been abandoned by its owner.

Seeing the girl act like this, Leylin withdrew a few potions from his robes and handed it to her. After all, he was not a stone-hearted person.

“This is a recovery potion, which can quickly heal physical wounds. Keep this well!”

“Also, this purple potion is an attack type potion. If there comes a day when you encounter a danger that not even Greem nor Fraser can handle, throw this out at it. Do you understand me?”

Leylin pointed at the purple potion and instructed Anna.

“Anna understands!” Her eyes turned red. She knew that she could not disobey her master’s orders, so she kept the potion well.

“Sigh....”

Looking at her leaving figure, Leylin sighed suddenly.

Although he had made many preparations, he knew that after a dozen odd years, this faction that he had left would most lightly disappear into thin air.

However, he had no regrets. These were all regular humans without any aptitude for becoming a magician. They would be of limited use to him in the future.

Most likely, the only use of this small faction to him would be to act as a cover for him to hide from people, and even then, it wasn't very secure at all.

In the end, entrusting everything to Anna was not a bad choice.

Apart from the Mandara Flower's essence on Anna's body, all other restrictions on Anna's body had already been removed by Leylin. From now onward, Anna would be a free human.

"I hope that after having these things, you will be able to live a happier life!"

Leylin's eyes were unreadable.

If Anna was to land in the hands of another magician, she would at most be a tool for them to vent their pent up energy. After their interest wanes, she may very well be used in an experiment. Now that Anna had followed Leylin, not only was she free from her status as a slave, Leylin had even saved her from the poison of Mandara Flower's essence. He had even given her the manor and medicinal shop, so no matter what happens next, he would be free from all guilt!"

"The troublesome matters have all been resolved. What's left is to finally dispose of the experiment lab and underground cells thoroughly!"

Leylin thought and got up to go to the underground.

This was the forbidden area that he had demarcated. Anna and the two Knights would not dare come down here so easily.

Under the dim light from the torch, Leylin withdrew a crystal ball. An old person's figure could be seen within it. His expression was crazed, and even had terror in it.

“We meet again, Mister Roman!” Leylin smiled and gave his salutations. However, in Roman's eyes, this smile was more harrowing than the devil's.

“Don't... Don't come over!” Roman's expression twisted, and he fearfully backed up to the walls of the crystal ball behind him.

However, Leylin's acute senses picked out the resolution behind the expression of the frightened vengeful spirit.

“Let me tell you a piece of good news, and a piece of bad news!”

Leylin proficiently placed many tools beside the crystal ball, and let the vengeful spirit let out ear piercing screams as he spoke.

“The good news is that I am going to leave here for a while!” Before the vengeful spirit had any response, Leylin smiled and said, “And the bad news is that no matter where I go, you will be going along with me!”

“Oh! No! No! I beg of you....”

“Alright! So then, tell me everything you know!”

At the beginning, Roman naturally would not speak of anything. However after over a year of torture, he had already begun to cough out some information.

After the narration of the vengeful spirit, Leylin shook his head. “It seems like Mister Roman still harbours wishful thoughts, so let us continue....”

Following Leylin’s statement, many hair-raising screams filled the lab, as if the howls of a person right before their death.

Although this vengeful spirit had showed signs of a mental breakdown half a month ago, it still managed to give misleading information to Leylin regarding the secrets he knew.

This vengeful spirit gave much information at once, and it was extremely complicated. However, with the A.I. Chip, Leylin was able to record all of its narration quickly, and sort it systematically.

The next few times, he discovered a problem.

Towards things which are pertaining to more general and common knowledge, Roman always handed them over easily. However, towards the crucial points and secrets, Roman glossed

over them and hid much of the important information.

However, Leylin did not mind at all. It would give huge amounts of information each day. Along with the filtering and sorting of the A.I. Chip, he would still obtain plenty of information.

Moreover, with the continuous and prolonged torture and interrogating, Leylin believed that one day, this vengeful spirit would tell him everything, and pray for a fast death.

After the daily routine of ‘questioning’ was completed, Leylin went towards the other rooms underground.

In here, various blood-stained torture instruments were hung along the walls. On the floor, there were even a few corpses with wounds littered across their bodies, causing them to be almost indiscernible as a human body.

[Beep! The surrounding negative energy density is higher by 34.5%, which satisfies the most basic condition for a spirit body's existence. The target's physical body has undergone various suffering and tortures. Chance of spirit body appearing: 1.23%]

The A.I. Chip scanned the few corpses and reported the figures.

“Compared to the one-thousandth chance of a spirit body

forming naturally, this proportion can be considered extremely high already!” Leylin stroked his chin, “If I were to be given more time, I would definitely be able to induce the formation of an artificial spirit body!”

The most efficient way to do research on souls was through the use of spirit bodies. This established theory was publicly accepted by all Dark Magi.

What Leylin had to do now was to continuously simulate the conditions of the outside world, and induce the forming of an artificial spirit body!

If this piece of news were to leak out, Leylin’s reputation would be completely interlinked with savagery and ruthlessness, which would be bad for his future developments.

“Reputation is also a kind of benefit! Although I’m not afraid of how people view me, even Magi wish to have dealings with those who have good reputations, but not a fellow with a dredged reputation.

Leylin sucked in a lungful of air and sprinkled power on the corpses.

With hissing sounds, the corpses turned into yellow pus after corroding, and very soon, they disappeared.

“Although I have finally stopped my experiments, which is a

little bit of a pity, it's not like I haven't obtained any results!" Leylin comforted himself, "At least, regarding the Lowian Academy Teachings' final step, the spirit awakening, I have already obtained sufficient data!"

As for the other ancient potion formula, Tears of Mary, Leylin still hadn't found any clues regarding it.

Chapter 80: Return

Within Extreme Night City, there was recently a matter that was neither big nor small happening. This turned into an idle conversation topic discussed by commoners after lunch tea.

Mister Leylin, an heir of a noble who had stayed in the city for three years and Viscount Jackson and Scholar Murphy's good friend, was temporarily leaving Extreme Night City.

Before he left, he actually handed over the manor and medicinal shop to his serving attendant, a maid, to handle the running.

For nobles, although they did vent their pent up energy on their serving maids frequently, they would never have handed over important establishments and such over to them because of this act.

After all, to them, maids were like toys, which could be changed or abandoned at any time. As for establishments and lands, they would often become the inheritance of an heir, and was the root for the growth of a family's continual development.

By doing this, Leylin had turned into a joke in front of the rest of the nobility. Not only did his reputation contain a lazy and kind person, it also extended to a muddle-headed trademark.

However, to the surprise of many, the maid, with the help of two Knights, very soon made the remainder of Leylin's faction submit to her. At the same time, Viscount Jackson City Lord and Murphy

stepped in personally to express their support for the maid, which allowed her to act on Leylin's behalf with his establishments.

After taking over Leylin's establishments, Anna dedicated herself to managing them and did it neatly and tidily. Not only did Leylin's establishment in Extreme Night City not fail as predicted by the other nobles, it continually developed, which made many nobles fall from their chair.

However, all of these things had nothing to do with Leylin. At this moment, he had long since left Extreme Night City.

Pitter Patter!

The sky turned dark, and bean sized drops of rain fell on the ground, initiating countless splashes.

Thud Thud Thud! A dark, handsome steed continually dashed along the road, and the scenery on both sides hurriedly retreated. Rainwater fell onto the body of a Knight, but was blocked by a raincoat.

By the time when it was midnight, the downpour stopped, and the Knight sought shelter in a cave.

A warm and bright flame illuminated the cave. A steel wok hung above the bonfire, and a white mushroom broth with a fragrant smell boiled. From time to time, a few pieces of meat jerky floated to the surface.

The Knight took off his coat, revealing a young face with brown hair and eyes that glittered like jewels.

This person was Leylin. At this moment, he drank the mushroom soup, while time bringing out a map from the A.I. Chip.

“After two months of continuous journeying, I am finally going to arrive at the academy!”

Leylin looked at the destination on the map. His expression was complicated. Previously, if not for him constantly changing his route and going to other markets to sell his potions, he wouldn't have been in such a rush, and the journey would have been a breeze.

However, with such a hastened journey, he had suffered plenty.

After having lived like a king for the past 3 years, Leylin had gotten used to the extravagant life of a noble, and almost could not adapt to his current situation.

“However, I have finally arrived. According to the map, I will arrive at the academy after three more days!”

“I never thought that a third party would actually intervene, and make the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and the other two factions come to a ceasefire agreement!”

Recalling the news that he heard from the markets in the past few days, Leylin was still somewhat in disbelief.

According to the news, with the pincer attack from the Sage Gotham's Hut and Whitewoods Castle, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy should have been in a precarious situation. Even the academy headquarters' defensive spell formation was damaged by half and was almost broken.

However, in the end, it was unknown what method the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy chairman used. He had actually managed to appeal for help from the Lighthouse of the Night.

The Lighthouse of the Night was one of the finest organisations in the South Coast. Its leader was rumoured to have the strength of a Rank 3 Magus.

Under the forceful mediation of the Lighthouse of the Night, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy finally managed to escape from its dangerous situation, eventually reaching a treaty between the two rivaling factions.

Leylin was not someone who would immediately respond when he was requested to return to the academy. Along the way, he always inquired for news. Only when he was indeed certain that Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was freed from war, and that the recalling of the acolytes was not a trap, did he decide to return to the academy.

“With this distance, I can already initiate the communicative

method that mentor showed me before! It's best to first discern the truth!"

Leylin's face turned serious, and he withdrew a pink coloured potion from his robes.

After removing the plug, he used the pink coloured potion to draw a mysterious rune on the ground. It was cursive and winding, like a worm.

Sssii! Pink smoke rose into the air continuously, before finally turning into the shape of a large pink ear.

"Who is this? This energy wave?" Beside the ear, Kroft's voice sounded, carrying many other static noises with it.

"It's me! Professor!" Leylin spoke softly.

"This voice! These Spiritual Force waves! You are Leylin! You have actually become a Level 3 Acolyte!" Astonishment could be heard in Kroft's voice.

For third grade acolytes, if they wanted to advance from a Level 2 Acolyte to a Level 3 Acolyte, it often required at least 5 years of constructing the mind runes and reinforcing of the sea of consciousness.

However, Leylin had spent only 3 years to advance to a Level 3 Acolyte, which shocked Kroft.

“You are only 17 this year, yet you have entered the realm of a Level 3 Acolyte!” Kroft’s voice, which was usually stable, carried a trace of excitement in it, “An acolyte who is Level 3 before the age of 20 often has an extremely huge chance of advancing to an official Magus. However, the numbers of such acolytes are extremely rare. Even your senior, Merlin, only advanced to a Level 3 Acolyte when he was 21.

If Kroft knew that Leylin had advanced to a Level 3 Acolyte only 1 year after he had left the academy, he might immediately label him as a genius!

However, striking it rich silently was always Leylin’s norm of handling his affairs. Towards his mentor’s astonishment, Leylin only bowed and said, “I was only lucky, and found a rare Void Flower”

A Void Flower was a type of mysterious plant. Its petals were purple, and if a magician were to raise it, it would be an extremely strong stimulant towards a magician’s Spiritual Force. The most crucial point was that the laws of reproduction for the Void Flower were strange. they could appear at any place on the continent. There were even cases in which magicians found traces of these plants at the bottom of the sea or in a pit of a volcano.

Moreover, the Void Flower had a special attribute. Once its petals were plucked, the whole stalk will immediately combust, leaving no traces behind.

Naturally, this was an excuse that Leylin thought of long ago. Through the A.I. Chip's data gathering of various mysterious plants, he had already prepared this excuse as a reason for his advancement.

It was not like there weren't any other Level 2 Acolytes who had used a Void Flower to advance to a Level 3 Acolyte before.

“Void Flower?” Kroft's shock was relayed through the ear. “Such a precious magician resource could also be found by you... That is a top grade material of which one petal can cost several thousands of Magic Crystals.... It can even aid a magician in advancing....”

However, it was extremely difficult to predict luck in this world. After sticking to his statement that the Void Flower was indeed used up, Kroft had no other choice but to believe him.

What followed next was that the mentor and student spoke of Leylin's recent journeying experiences. When Kroft learned that Leylin had successfully completed the mission from the academy, he expressed his congratulations.

Towards the end, Leylin asked in a solemn tone, “Professor, regarding the recalling of the acolytes to the academy.....”

Why he did not ask the academy directly was, naturally, because he was afraid that it would be a trap. It may have very well been that the chairman of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had some other plans, and might be prepared to sacrifice a bunch of acolytes.

“....” Kroft remained silent on the other side of the communication spell, before finally speaking again some time later.

“The recall of acolytes, this time, had indeed been approved by the chairman and board of directors. I can assure you that there is no lie in the recall, but....”

Leylin hesitated and held his breath, afraid to disturb his mentor.

“Originally, if you were still a Level 2 Acolyte, I would most likely have not approved of you returning to the academy. However, now that you are a Level 3 Acolyte, things are different. Let me ask you, do you wish to advance to an official Magus?”

Kroft asked suddenly.

“A Rank 1 Magus. It is often the starting point for a Magus who pursues the truth. I definitely want to advance!” Leylin’s voice was low.

“If that is the case, then come back! When you’re here, I’ll tell you everything! There isn’t much time now....” The pink ear shuddered and exploded immediately, turning into a huge cloud of smoke as it dissipated into the air.

In the empty cave, Kroft’s voice finally resounded one last time, “Heed my words! This opportunity is extremely rare but is also accompanied by danger. If you wish to walk further down the path

of a Magus, then hurry back!”

Leylin looked at the gradually disappearing smoke and muttered to himself.

Through the long distance communication with Kroft today, although time was short, Leylin was able to understand the circumstances within the academy.

From this, he knew that the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had indeed extricated itself from danger but the war seemed to still be ongoing. This was why the academy forcefully recalled its acolytes back.

Moreover, opportunities often came hand in hand with risks. Looking at Kroft’s opinion, it seemed that plenty of opportunities would await him if he returned. It even related to the advancement that Leylin would have to undergo in the future.

“An official Magus!”

Leylin walked towards the entrance of the cave, and looked at the downcast sky and pitter-patter sounds of the downpour, letting out a sigh.

These few days, apart from making haste, he did nothing else but to go to a few magician markets to have a look. However, no matter how many Magic Crystals he was willing to part with, the market never contained any information pertaining to the

advancement of an official Magus. Moreover, no one even sold a method of obtaining such information.

Looking at it, it seemed as though a large, invisible hand had directly hauled all of the information regarding official Magi away, not letting anyone else know of it.

“To be able to monopolise the information to such an extent, it must be supported by, at least, a majority of magicians within the large organisations and factions in the South Coast....”

Chapter 81: Granite Ape

Leylin's gaze seemed distant as if sparks of wisdom radiated from it.

“For the Magi of the upper echelons, under the circumstances where they are unable to advance any further, their only concern is the protection and prosperity of their own family and factions!”

“For that, they monopolised the knowledge of advancing to a Magus, isolating wandering magicians and halting their advancement. Moreover, even the academy has strictly regulated the information given for an acolyte to advance into a Level 3 Acolyte. . .”

Leylin, who came from another world, naturally saw through these methods of sealing away information.

However, compared to those high and mighty Magi, Leylin was currently but an ant. Even if he saw through it, there was no way that he could resist it.

After all, Leylin was only a Level 3 Acolyte, and not even an official Magus!

“There is definitely information in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy regarding the experience of advancement to a Rank 1 Magus, but I'm afraid it's not something that I can obtain easily! It's a pity, but this is already the most probable situation I can think of....”

Leylin looked at the distant raindrops, sinking into deep thoughts.

After the harrowing experience of advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte, Leylin was rather traumatic over the incident. Before making preparations fully and obtaining enough information, he would definitely not dare to breakthrough into an official Magus.

For magicians, the step to become an official Magus, from an acolyte, was the most crucial step, and no mistakes could be allowed.

Leylin was, however, unable to discover any information pertaining to this. Furthermore, to obtain this information, he could only plan to seize it from an official Magus.

However, the strength of official Magi far exceeded that of a Level 3 Acolyte. Not to mention that the defensive force field surrounding the official Magi which the A.I. Chip had detected. Leylin had no means, even now, to break through it. The difficulty of obtaining information on advancement from an official Magus had long surpassed Leylin's limits. Only if Leylin was mad would he proceed with it.

As for what Leylin knew, obtaining information on the advancement was the most appropriate method.

“According to the news that Kroft had hinted at earlier, although it might be rather dangerous at this time, it is also the best chance

to obtain these resources and information!”

Leylin looked at the raging thunderstorm outside and suddenly steeled his heart.

Although he was someone who treasured his life dearly, in this situation where his path seemed bleak, he could only muster up courage, and take a gamble!

Right now, he was at the optimal age to advance to an official Magus. Once he missed this chance, even if he could obtain resources and information in future, it would be unlikely that his aged body would support him through the breakthrough to a Rank 1 Magus.

Moreover, it was not as though he did not have any confidence. At the very least, according to his own hypothesis and the A.I. Chip’s simulations, there was, at least, a 90% chance that the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy required him to fulfill some sort of dangerous mission, and hence, would not sacrifice him! This was enough for him to take a gamble!

“I’ll take a gamble this once! If I am unable to scale the absolute peak and observe the radiance from the rays of dawn, then let me be sludge and sink thoroughly into the earth, and rot!”

His eyes sparkled as he gazed intensely at the thunderstorm raging in front of him.

.....

Three days later, in the outer vicinity of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

More than half of the surrounding forests around the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had already been destroyed. The ground was filled with traces of holes and depressions. Not far away, a few patches of the ground were white in colour, and on top of it were some rubble and ashes. From these, one could surmise what kind of bitter battle the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had gone through!

“It was actually reduced to a state like this....” Leylin rode the large horse and dashed ahead, feeling absolutely gleeful that he had made an unwavering decision to leave the academy beforehand.

It had been such a massive battle that it had actually even ruined half of the geography around the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. If Leylin were to remain here, he did not have any confidence in protecting his life.

Following the path and traveling on for another dozen minutes, a huge graveyard appeared before Leylin’s eyes.

This was the underground entrance to the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, a large granite graveyard. However, right now, half of the tombstones were shattered, and many graves were also dug open, revealing the dark passages within. The surrounding stone

walls and mud reflected signs having been abused by many spells. Before Leylin's eyes, the alert of the A.I. Chip continuously sounded, revealing the extremely high radiation from some traces of these spells.

“Every little tombstone here was actually a personal passageway for each professor in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and all are now in such ruins....”

Although he long knew that the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy would definitely suffer a catastrophic loss, this miserable scene still caused Leylin to inhale a mouthful of cold ai

Bang!

Leylin casually kicked a stone on the floor, and walked towards the centremost area of the graveyard, where a huge tombstone that looked like a castle was erected.

This was the huge entrance to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and was the common path for all acolytes.

The surface of the castle was littered with cracks, and part of the topmost area was chipped off. What remained was tottering, and seemed to be on the verge of collapse. Seeing such a sight made Leylin somewhat worried; he felt that if he were to stick a finger out and poke it, this castle of a tombstone would crumble.

“Halt! Outsider! If you are unable to show any items of proof, I

will make you pay the price of blood!”

The two stone statues by the large entrance were completely destroyed. The Winged Earthworm and Two-Headed Dog from before were now gone. Right when Leylin wanted to enter, a metallic voice sounded.

Accompanying that voice, a large shadow from the peak of the ashened castle climbed down at a rapid speed. This black figure was taller by an average human by two heads, and its hands were extremely long, extending to the ground.

Although the castle tombstone was filled with cracks, no matter how this black figure climbed, the castle did not waver an inch. Obviously, the construction of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was not as weak as it seemed on the surface.

Bang! The black figure leapt, and a huge shadow was projected on the ground, completely engulfing Leylin.

Thud! The black figure pounded on the ground, bringing up a layer of dust.

Leylin squinted and finally saw the appearance of the black figure. This was a large ape-like creature. Its whole body was layered with granite, and both of its hands propped itself up on the ground.

[Beep! A creature with high levels of energy has been detected.

Now comparing to database. Determined as Granite Ape!] The A.I. Chip's voice intoned.

Granite Ape was a creature in the Magus World with a battle strength comparable to an official Magus.

“I sense the energy waves emanating from the item of proof on your body, take it out!”

The Granite Ape looked at Leylin, and sniffed him with its large snout. As the ape approached, an extremely dense and putrid stench wafted over. Leylin had to muster up a lot of strength to endure the need to frown.

“Item of proof?”

Leylin thought for a while, before hurriedly withdrawing the red metal card from his sack that he obtained before when taking up the mission.

“So it was this!”

The Granite Ape took the metal card and swallowed it in one gulp, as if munching on some delicacy. It even closed its eyes to savour the taste of it.

“It's an acolyte of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy who took on an outside mission previously!”

After a dozen seconds, the Granite Ape opened its large eyes and said to Leylin, “Brat, enter!”

“Please accept my offerings!” Leylin thought, and bowed before the Granite Ape, before taking a bunch of banana like fruits and placing it on the ground.

“Elephant Stout Bananas! Not bad, not bad!” The large ape nodded its head, and took one from the bunch and peeled it, before tossing it into its mouth, as if it could not wait.

“Can I ask what happened to the two guardians from before?”

Leylin asked cautiously, after seeing the Granite Ape enjoying itself.

“They’re dead!” The large ape answered concisely, and Leylin gasped silently.

This was something that he had long guessed. The two statues were obviously the first line of defense for the academy. After being attacked, they would easily be the first to perish.

After another bow, Leylin entered through the entrance of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

The dimly lit flight of downward stairs was the same as from

before, when Leylin had left the academy.

However, for some unknown reason - which may have been the fact that he was now a Level 3 Acolyte with a greater Spiritual Force - Leylin discovered that there were a few marks on the walls and stones, with some traces of blood. There were even some faint wails of spirits who had perished, which travelled to Leylin's ears.

Leylin, who had conducted a massive amount of experiments on spirit bodies, would never mistake these noises for something else.

Along the way, he noticed that he had run into far fewer acolytes than he did normally. Leylin estimated that the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy didn't even have half of its original strength. Even the Trading Post and Mission Area hotspots seemed to be devoid of people.

At the mission desk counter, Leylin handed over the records in the crystal ball and a piece of the Great Snake Mankestre's scales.

"I'm here to complete a mission!"

"Alright, please hold on!" The staff at the counter had changed too. This was a freckled girl, who seemed to only be a Level 2 Acolyte.

While he was waiting, Leylin was bored to death, and looked at his surroundings.

Although the number of people in the Mission Area had been greatly reduced, the number of missions did not reduce but increased instead. Moreover, many of them had increased rewards compared to before. According to Leylin's guess, while the difficulty of these missions had remained the same, the rewards had increased to twice of what they were originally.

This was an abnormal scene, which made Leylin's eyes flash.

"Ley...Leylin!" A muffled yet hoarse voice sounded behind Leylin.

Leylin turned around and saw a swollen figure wrapped in a black veil. Moreover, the stench of pus drifted over.

"You are... Nyssa!" Leylin's eyes widened.

Naturally he recalled this image clearly, but even if he didn't, the A.I. Chip had recorded it.

"You actually still remember me!" Nyssa's voice had a tinge of excitement. At the same time, an energy wave leaked from her body. According to the A.I. Chip, she was actually a Level 2 Acolyte.

Chapter 82: A Way To Breakthrough

Leylin's expression softened; this was one of the rare occasions that this occurred. He still remembered this unfortunate girl and the grief and perseverance on this girl's face before.

"It's really great to see you again, how are Guricha and Dodoria?"

Leylin smiled.

Hearing this, Nyssa who was wrapped in the black cloak shuddered, and her voice was gloomy as she said, "They're all dead. Even Kaliweir, Beirut, the ones who came with us from the Chernobyl Islands, more than half of them perished...."

"My apologies...."

Leylin did not know what he ought to say. Although he did divulge a bit of information previously, it was extremely obscure. Whether or not Kaliweir and the rest could figure it out, and if they could view it solemnly were all matters of uncertainty.

Moreover, even if they discovered that something was amiss, they were only first or second grade acolytes without much aptitude. Whether or not they could obtain discriminating treatment from the academy and leave was also difficult to say.

As expected, Nyssa continued, "After getting news from you, we'd came together several times. However, there were no good

measures. Not long later, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy announced a lockdown of the whole academy, otherwise, death would be granted... Afterwards, the war began....”

Official Magi were the core strength of the war between both sides. Kaliweir, together with the others who weren't even Level 3 Acolytes were not fit to be cannon fodder, so heavy casualties were to be expected.

Leylin could not think of any consoling words. Nyssa too did not continue, and silence ensued.

“Mission recorded and confirmed as completed! This is your reward, please check and accept!”

At this moment, the freckled girl from behind the counter had finally raised her head, and scribbled on a piece of parchment paper with a feather quill, finally handing over a small leather sack to Leylin.

Leylin weighed the sack, and rubbing noises between Magic Crystals came travelling from the leather sack.

“I still have something on, so I'll take my leave first!”

Leylin said to Nyssa, leaving her with a complicated expression on her face.

“Mission is completed, time to meet with Mentor!”

Leylin walked through the gardens and came to the experiment lab where Kroft was.

Dong Dong Dong!

Leylin knocked on the door, following which, the door creaked open, revealing a pretty girl.

The girl was slightly shorter than Leylin by half a head and had beautiful, green hair. Her body contours were extremely seductive. Due to the proximity, Leylin could even catch a whiff of her perfume.

“Bicky! It’s been a long time!” Leylin spoke softly.

“You are... Leylin!” The green-haired girl sized up Leylin suspiciously with a glance, before cheering as she leapt into his arms.

Feeling the soft perky abundance against his chest, and the fragrance that wafted into his nose, Leylin could not help but exclaim at this little girl having matured.

“Alright! I am here to visit Kroft!”

Leylin waited for a good while, and seeing that the girl did not want to leave his embrace, he could only he cajole her while

patting her on the shoulders.

“Mentor is just inside, together with Merlin!” Bicky rubbed her somewhat reddened eyes, and her delicate features revealed a smile, “You being alright is really a great thing....”

Leylin nodded his head and walked into the experiment lab.

“Leylin!” Merlin greeted him first. His features did not change much from the past 3 years, only that his temperament seemed more stable and mature. After seeing Leylin, he forced an extremely ugly smile.

“Senior Merlin!” Leylin bowed. He knew that a part of Merlin’s face had suffered from irreparable damage from before, so he did not mind that he was unable to portray common expressions.

After which, Leylin continued walking in.

There was only an experiment table in here. On the operating table, a white-haired, middle-aged man placed the test tube in his hands down, and his pair of golden eyes met Leylin’s eyes.

“I can smell the barely faint smell of the Void Flower in your body, it seems like you really got the petals of a Void Flower!”

Kroft stared at Leylin for some time, before smiling, “You’re really a lucky fellow!”

“Haha...” Leylin scratched the back of his head, revealing an embarrassed expression, but deep down he was elated.

After deciding to use the Void Flower as an excuse, he had been concocting the substitute ingredients for the Void Flower.

99.98%

After huge amounts of experiments, he had obtained a type of potion which could emit the scent of the Void Flower with a similarity of 99.98%, to use as his trump card to fool others.

Of course, this potion only had a similar fragrance to the Void Flower, but it did not contain any effect of the original Void Flower at all.

Before coming to the academy, Leylin had especially sprayed some of it on his body, and now it seemed that even Kroft was fooled.

After which, Leylin only had to insist that the effect of the Void Flower was fully consumed by him, then nobody would be able to discover any gaps in his speech.

“No matter what, achieving Level 3 Acolyte before you are 20, you can already be considered as one of the core acolytes in the academy. Only that you have to go to the Administrative Area to register, then your various welfares and statuses will increase....”

Kroft told Leylin about some benefits and authority given to a Level 3 Acolyte, which would be awarded to Leylin.

Finally, Leylin could hardly wait any longer and blurted out, “Professor, this time, I’m here to ask about the matter of the official Magus that you spoke of previously....”

“I knew it!” Kroft nodded, “Ever since I saw you after your first meditation, I knew that you are resolute on the path of a Magus....”

The white-haired, middle-aged man pointed at the chairs in the lab, “Regarding this, it might take a while, so let us sit first.”

Saying which, Kroft walked towards a recliner and sat down, with Leylin following behind him.

The black chair was draped with the leather of some creature, and running your hands across it gave a comfortable feeling. Between the two chairs, there was a small round table.

Bicky served two hot, steaming cups of green refreshments-- her actions was of the official standard as if she had practiced serving innumerable times-- and hurriedly retreated.

“Green Root Fruit Juice! I never thought that Professor would still keep this habit!” Leylin sniffed the fragrance, and his eyes reflected reminiscence.

“Haha... I have always liked these kinds of drinks, even when I’m idle or when doing experiments, I will still take a sip or two. Moreover, for an official Magus, 3 years is only a short time in their life!”

Kroft made several sips of the drink and then asked, “Leylin, do you know how to advance to an official Magus?”

“Please show me the way, Mentor!” Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn.

“An official Magus has long since overcome the limitations of a human. They are able to harness the nature’s energy and obtain a longer lifespan. Even the worst official Magus is far beyond that of a Level 3 Acolyte! They are extraordinary!”

Kroft’s voice sounded mellow, almost as if he were singing.

“This is because of the energy and devastating strength that an official Magus controls. A long time-- maybe a thousand odd years ago, on the Luxe Castle of the South Coast, all magisterium in the South Coast have come to a mutual agreement to control the information about official Magi, and have even endorsed it...”

Kroft spoke of the past history of the Magus World.

“No matter what it is similar to the non-proliferation treaty of nuclear weapons of my previous world!” thought Leylin.

“From then on, before a Level 3 Acolyte advanced to an official Magus, they will sign a contract with the person or organisation imparting the knowledge to them. To promise that there will be in no way the concrete steps of advancing into an official Magus will be divulged. Any violators will accept the judgment of the Trial’s Eye, and his soul to be scorched for a thousand years....”

Kroft looked at Leylin, “I too have signed the contract before, hence I was able to obtain the resources and information needed for advancement. Due to the restrictions of this contract, I am unable to share the information with you!”

“However, I can still tell you of some general knowledge around it!” Seeing the obviously disappointed face of Leylin, Kroft continued.

“To advance to an official Magus, the first requirement is for the acolyte to reach a certain standard in the Spiritual Force. From what I see, you are very close to this criteria already. Actually, for many Level 3 Acolyte, this is not a problem at all.

“As for the real crux, it is to have a defensive spell model of a Rank 1 Spell. This model will become your Innate Defensive Spell in the future. Also, you need a standard amount of Grine Water to complement with the breakthrough!”

Leylin listened attentively, and various emotions flashed across his eyes, “So then, the criteria to advance would be these three: A certain level of Spiritual Force, a defensive Rank 1 Spell and Grine

Water! Right?”

“Indeed!” Kroft nodded his head, “Rank 1 Magus spell models and Grine Water are controlled by the huge factions. Even on the counters of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, you will not be able to find them!”

Leylin smiled bitterly. He had already scouted most of the markets in the Poolfield Kingdom. There was absolutely no one place which contained Grine Water or a defensive Rank 1 Spell.

From Level 1 Acolyte to Level 2 Acolyte, all that Leylin had learnt were Rank 0 spells. Obviously, the Magi had made clear divisions on the rankings of spells. Moreover, they coined the spells that acolytes learnt as Rank 0 spells, to differentiate between those spells of official Magi.

As for Grine Water, Leylin seemed to have seen some information pertaining to it on a ruined draft regarding Potioneer. That was a type of potion that was rather difficult for Leylin with his current abilities to brew. Moreover, many main ingredients were monopolised by the huge factions, and there were no traces of the formula.

“So then, Professor, you asked me to come back, which means that I am able to obtain the Grine Water and defensive Rank 1 Spell?” Leylin suddenly asked.

“I can only say that it’s possible.”

Kroft took another sip of the green refreshment. “Advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte before you turn 20 is already considered to be a potential Magus. Therefore, you are qualified to sign a contract with the academy!”

Chapter 83: Bloodbath In The Secret Plane

“Contract? What contract?”

Leylin asked.

“First, you cannot reveal any information regarding the advancement to an official Magus. Furthermore, after you become an official Magus, the contract that you signed when you entered the academy would not impose any restrictions on you anymore. Hence, you must swear upon your soul, under the witness of Trial’s Eye, you will be of service to the academy for 100 years!”

“After signing the contract, you will be able to obtain a defensive Rank 1 Magus spell for free, and a standard amount of Grine Water!

Leylin saw an introduction to Trial’s Eye before on an ancient manual. It seemed to be a massive organism with Rules from a different world. It did not have a consciousness of its own, and magicians preferred to use it as a witness when undertaking important contracts.

The effectiveness of its constraints was known to be amongst the strongest of all contracts. Moreover, there was no way to be rid of it.

Once an agreement was formed, within the span of a hundred years, even if the academy were to have Leylin sacrifice his life during a battle, he had no choice but to obey.

This agreement was similar to a slave contract, yet it had more constraints stipulated in it than in a regular slave contract.

Leylin rejected it immediately within his heart. He was a person for valued absolute freedom, so it was rather distasteful for him to be under such constraints.

Of course, on the surface, Leylin still pretended to be extremely moved, struggling for an answer.

Finally, Leylin asked, with his throat a little parched, “So, Mentor, did you sign such a contract too?”

“Indeed! And because of this, I’ve joined Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and became a member of the professors!” Kroft gave a definitive reply, “Actually, the treatment that the academy gives to Magus like us - who came from abroad - is not too bad. They wouldn’t let us take on extremely difficult tasks as well!”

“Professor, asking me to come back to the academy, I’m sure there is some other way?”

Leylin looked at Kroft in anticipation.

Signing a contract and obtaining resources was a very common practice, and had nothing to do with the current precarious situation the academy was in. Leylin naturally did not assume that Kroft asked him to come back for this.

After hearing Leylin's words, Kroft seemed to be happy. "Indeed, you are still as intelligent as before. Your eyes are also filled with wisdom, if not for your average aptitude, your achievements in future would definitely surpass Merlin's!"

The façade of inferiority towards Merlin was put on by Leylin. He smiled, not speaking, waiting to hear what Kroft had to say.

"Actually, the war of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is not over!"

This sentence of Kroft made Leylin's hair stand straight.

"What?" Leylin was so flabbergasted that he stood up immediately, "Was the war not mediated after the Lighthouse of the Night stepped in to stop Sage Gotham's Hut and Whitewoods Castle?"

"This news is indeed accurate but is incomplete. The war between official Magi have ended, but for acolytes it is still far from ending!"

Kroft smiled wryly.

"Although Lighthouse of the Night is one of the strongest guilds around, they are not the only one. Behind Sage Gotham's Hut and Whitewoods Castle, there is also a powerful guild supporting them from behind.

“Hence, under the mediation of Lighthouse of the Night, although the war between both sides has ended, yet there was a special clause!”

“What is it?” Leylin could faintly discern that it had something to do with the acolytes, but he still asked.

“The opposing factions have requested us to recall all of our acolytes, and engage in a bloodbath with their acolytes in a secret plane!”

“Secret plane!? Bloodbath?”

Towards Leylin who had abundant information and knowledge, only after searching in the A.I. Chip’s data bank, he found the information he needed regarding those two terms.

The secret plane was a dimension used by magicians to protect their own lab and store their resources. It is created by a spell and the dimension is got by connecting to a region from the outside world.

Because of the powerful spell effects outside of these secret planes, magicians of the acolyte level could not break into it. As for some higher levelled secret planes, even if official Magi were to enter, they would also perish.

With the passing of time, some magician guilds will join forces, using spells to form a temporary secret plane, and conduct some

experiments or for war/battle.

As for bloodbath, it contained the meaning of madness and massacre.

In the Magus World, if two magicians have a huge conflict that could not longer be mediated, only with death they would rest their case. Under these circumstances, they will undergo a bloodbath with a host as a witness!

Before the bloodbath, both parties would sign an agreement. After any one side dies, their families, professors and friends may not directly avenge them.

This was a kind of battle, but with the effects of spells, the contracts, too, were difficult to breach. Many magicians with dignity would engage in this life and death conflict, yet they did not wish for the collateral damage to spread. So a bloodbath was the best choice.

“So, the academy summoned us acolytes back....”

Leylin suddenly realised that his throat was extremely parched as if he were a person dying from thirst.

“During the signing of the contract, the other parties have summoned Trial’s Eye as a witness, so our academy could only go according to the stipulated agreement. If not, all of us professors—including the chairman-- will have our souls resting in eternal

peace....”

“This time, it’s not only you guys, even the other genius fifth-grade acolytes, including your senior Merlin, must participate in this bloodbath. Moreover, the acolytes from each of the 3 academies, will all be at the same place....”

“Wait, which is to say, the acolytes from the other two academies will join forces and attack our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?”

Leylin felt rather dizzy, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes have already suffered tremendous casualties from the war before. As for Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle, they were forces with a level similar to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. If any of these two were to engage in a bloodbath battle with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s acolytes, it would be 50-50, not to mention there’s two of them now.

Moreover, at the moment, there were only 50-60% acolytes remaining behind in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

“This is too crazy, why would the academy accept such conditions?”

“There’s no choice, who asked for our academy to be in such a state? Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle wants to wipe our acolytes out at one go, and let the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s legacy be broken!” Kroft smiled bitterly, “Furthermore, be it our acolytes or the enemies’, they are not allowed to bring in any battle items of official Magus strength. This is programmed

into the defensive spell of the secret plane. Any tools which exceed the strength of an acolyte will immediately be rejected upon entering the secret plane....”

“Can I still leave now?” Leylin harboured his tiny glimmer of hope.

“What do you think?” Kroft looked at Leylin deeply in the eyes, and the meaning implicated made Leylin quiver.

“Alright then!” Leylin resigned to his fate and sat down. “The bad news is over? You should tell me some good news now!”

“You little brat!” Kroft smiled and shook his head. “Before the bloodbath, the academy will conduct a competition, where the rewards are bountiful. Moreover, various remuneration have increased by twofold, and the spell models and potions on the sales counter are also at a large discount....”

“They want to raise the strength of their own acolytes before the bloodbath, huh?” Leylin thought silently. He was a very optimistic person and had already faintly thought of a scenario like this before, unlike the extremely shocked appearance he was putting on right now. Since there is no room for retreat, his brain immediately adapted to the situation.

“All these have nothing to do with the advancement of official Magus. Previous, Mentor has told me that there is a method to advance, could it be inside the bloodbath?”

“Indeed! The academy has issued a mission to all Level 3 Acolyte like you for a blood vengeance. You are to massacre as many acolytes as you can inside the bloodbath!”

A sign of madness appeared for the first time on Kroft's bespectacled features.

“We have assigned points on the enemy acolytes, every Level 1 Acolyte is worth 1 contribution points, Level 2 Acolytes are worth 3 points, and Level 3 Acolyte as 10 points. Towards the more noteworthy acolytes, we have corresponding values assigned to them.

There was a huge temptation behind Kroft's words, “This time the academy's mission reward is extremely bountiful. If you were to obtain enough contribution points, no matter if it is a Rank 1 Magus defensive spell model or Grine Water, they all can be exchanged for with contribution points!”

“This is the only method that does not require a contract, and still can advance with resources!”

“If it's this way....” Leylin closed his eyes, and quietly pondered of his mentor's speech.

On the surface, Leylin looked calm. In fact, his brain had already begun to ponder over various scenarios, with the A.I. Chip constantly bringing out different simulations, projecting them in front of Leylin.

Minutes later, Leylin stood up again and bowed to his Professor Kroft. “If there is nothing else, please allow me to take my leave!”

“Where are you going?” Kroft was rather stunned by his own apprentice’s actions.

“Of course to see the Trading Post and sales counter!”

Leylin bowed again, and after obtaining Kroft’s approval, he left immediately.

Walking on an empty school route, Leylin thought over many things. First of all, trying to escape under the noses of various professors of the official Magus Level and then being hunted was something impossible.

Leylin only thought briefly, before beginning to toss that notion away.

Previously, he was able to escape was because of Kroft’s pointer and his personal capabilities. The largest reason was still that the academy allowed him to leave. If not, regardless of then and now, Leylin would never be able to walk out of the academy’s doors.

“Compared to official Magus, it seems like there is more hope in the bloodbath between acolytes, although the situation is still as unfavourable as before!”

Leylin walked to the Trading Post. The acolytes here numbered

slightly more than other places, but many acolytes still had glum expressions on their faces. It seems that they had already gotten news of the upcoming bloodbath.

First, Leylin went to Woon's store to have a look. A pity, however, the little wooden hut was already gone, and the fatty Woon was not known to have escaped or died.

Leylin sighed in disappointment. At the Trading Post, he purchased some ingredients he needed, before walking to the spell models sales counter.

Chapter 84: A Secret Divulged

“Is there anything I can help you with?”

The disgusting woman behind the counter previously had now disappeared, changing into a friendly looking old geezer.

“Where’s the woman from before?” Leylin asked.

“Dakota? Already dead!” A tinge of sadness seemed to appear on the old geezer’s face.

“Give me the spell model catalogue!” Thinking of that fussy woman from before, Leylin felt extremely glad. Even the sinking feeling from the mandatory attendance of the bloodbath had slowly reduced.

“Here!” The old geezer handed over a booklet made from parchment paper over to Leylin.

Leylin opened to have a look. The first page was of Fire element Rank 0 spells, on the page number it shone with red light, indicating the element of the spells listed.

Leylin continued flipping. Water element, Plant element, even Necromancy Rank 0 spells had all shone in their respective colours.

As for Shadow, Dark Element Rank 0 spells, Leylin had already collected almost all, so he did not look any further.

While browsing through the booklet, Leylin realised that the prices of these spell models had reduced by more than half, so they were already selling them at a loss.

It was a pity, however, that for regular acolytes, to master a Rank 0 spell, they must take at least months. Towards this imminent bloodbath, it was futile to start mastering them now.

“This Secondary Energy Fireball of the Fire element, Dampened Earth of the Water element, and the manipulation of corpses from the Necromancy Element, and this, and this.... One of them each.”

Since the spell model prices have plunged down, and Leylin had Magic Crystals, he could naturally afford to splurge on them.

To him, it was like a sweep of the warehouse sale.

After handing the old geezer a huge bag of Magic Crystals, and requested him to send people to carry the books over, Leylin then asked, “Are there any Rank 1 spell models here?”

“My apologies, our counter here only sells Rank 0 spells for the acolytes.” The old geezer shrugged his shoulders and put on a helpless appearance. It seems like Leylin wasn’t the first acolyte to ask him about this.

After obtaining an answer he expected, Leylin nodded his head and left.

His earlier question was just to try his luck, so he wasn't very disappointed.

Ka-cha! Creak!

First, it was the sound of a bronze key entering the keyhole and the turning of the lock.

“We're here, place the things down!”

Leylin opened his dorm's door and said towards several servants carrying boxes behind him.

Boom! The few servants placed the spell models books onto the ground, letting off a loud noise.

After placing Leylin's purchase, these servants bowed to Leylin and walked out of the room.

“There is actually no change here!”

Leylin sized up his room. There was still a bright light radiating from within. Apart from more dust being collected, the rest was still the same as before.

“Amansi!”

Leylin snapped his fingers. Suddenly a green whirlwind appeared from within the room.

The spiralling of the whirlwind continued, bringing the bedsheets and tablecloths floating into the air. A few grey dust particles were sucked into that whirlwind.

Very soon the green whirlwind spun around the room once, and many dust particles were trapped in it, turning a murky green colour, finally it dropped into the bin.

“Now it seems much more comfortable and clean!”

Leylin looked at the dorm that was as good as new, and nodded his head in satisfaction, before placing the spell models and ingredients away nicely.

After all was done, Leylin first went to the dining hall to have a sumptuous dinner, before returning to the room and picking up a spell model book.

“Secondary Energy Fireball huh?” Leylin looked at the fire red book. “A.I. Chip! Record!”

[Beep! Scanning in progress!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

Hours later, the A.I. Chip replied, [The spell model of Secondary Energy Fireball has been recorded, analysing in progress: 9.23%]

After his advancement into a Level 3 Acolyte, the A.I. Chip which was part of his soul also obtained an increase in processing capabilities.

To Leylin, other acolytes need continuous memorisation and use of their Spiritual Force to construct the spell models in their mind. This would require a huge consumption of time, and once something goes awry, it would result in a waste of time.

However, for Leylin, he only needed the A.I. Chip to analyse the spell and send it over to his hippocampus, then he would remember this spell model forever. In future, he only needed to activate his Spiritual Force, before completely mastering the spell model.

To put it simply, the A.I. Chip had substituted the process of memory and also created a framework for him in his mind. It was like digging a pool, the A.I. Chip would help Leylin in digging a pool, and Leylin only needed to put forth his Spiritual Force like water into the pool. This saved a huge amount of time, which made Leylin's learning abilities on spell models much faster than regular acolytes.

“A.I. Chip! Establish mission! With all the Rank 0 spells as the foundation, begin simulating the model for a Rank 1 spell!”

From what Leylin could see, the might of a Rank 1 spell was

stronger than a Rank 0 spell. Only with enough material, with the A.I. Chip's calculation abilities, can he manage to simulate a certain Rank 1 spell model. There could even be a new spell model that had never appeared before in the Magus World!

[Mission establishing! Information on Rank 1 spells missing, beginning simulation....]

Rows of data were projected in front of Leylin's eyes.

[Estimated might of a Rank 1 spell: 20 degrees and above! Information sources: <In Depth Spell Model Analysis>, <All Living Things Studies>, <Spell Constructing Manual>, Umbra's Hand spell model, Secondary Energy Fireball spell model.... Simulation time: Unable to estimate!]

The A.I. Chip listed many sources of material and even replied with an answer that it was unable to estimate for the first time.

However, Leylin smiled. "As expected, although the time is not confirmed, but the A.I. Chip can very well simulate a spell model of a Rank 1 spell...."

"What's next, once I have a standard amount of Grine Water, and reach the requirement of the Spiritual Force to advance, then I can give it a go...."

For Leylin, he would try simulating a Rank 1 spell model with the A.I. Chip. But for the Grine Water, as it was a type of intermediate

potion, the formula had always been held by the various large magician guilds. There was no way of them being divulged to outsiders. Many of the ingredients to brew it were also monopolised by these guilds, so there was no way he could brew it on his own.

Hence, his main goal in the upcoming bloodbath, was, under the circumstances of self-preservation, that he would try his best to acquire as many contribution points as possible to exchange for the Grine Water!

If he even had to purchase a spell model with the contribution points, he had no confidence to retaliate under the two academies joining forces and obtaining enough contribution points.

Moreover, even if he did, he would be marked down by the enemy Magi, which was not beneficial for his future growth.

But now he only needed to get one of the two, so the difficulty was reduced by half. The attention he would be getting would be reduced too.

“Also, I have to complete the Fallen Star Pendant for a chance to live on in the bloodbath!”

Leylin’s hand turned over, revealing that silver cross.

Under the bright light, the jewels on the cross glittered resplendently.

“Once I have this low-grade defensive Magic Artifact, my survival chances will definitely increase in the secret plane!”

Leylin muttered, and came to his experiment lab beside the room, withdrawing the Confining Spirit Sphere that held Roman captive.

The originally dimmed crystal ball gradually radiated with light after Leylin undid the seal. Light reflected from it like amber, with a translucent worm-sized like human figure in it.

“Roman! Actually, I wanted to spend more time on you to pry more information from your mouth. A pity, however, there isn’t much time left....”

Regret surfaced on Leylin’s face.

As for the vengeful spirit, Roman, who was inside the crystal ball, he shuddered. The crazed and bloodthirsty look disappeared from his face, replaced by a pair of eyes that radiated intelligence.

“A Level 3 Acolyte’s soul which transformed into a vengeful spirit, can definitely accomplish the final step - Spirit awakening!”

Leylin placed the silver cross beside the Confining Spirit Sphere and began to draw various runes with a feather quill and other tools on the large experiment table.

The runes and characters continuously writhed and twisted, forming a strange magic rune.

Along with Leylin's incantation and tossing of ingredients, the huge magic rune let off a dim grey glow.

As for Roman who was within the Confining Spirit Sphere, he seemed to have seen something extremely dangerous, and even his voice started to quiver, "No... You can't do this...."

The final step of synthesizing the Fallen Star Pendant required a sealed spirit that was full of energy, which is the best catalyst for the activation process.

Roman, who had the strength of a Level 3 Acolyte in his previous life, was the perfect ingredient for Leylin right now!

After a vengeful spirit is sealed within the Fallen Star Pendant, Roman's soul will be forever trapped within that silver cross, and suffer from never-ending torment. He could only wait for the day when the silver cross shatters, before his soul will be dissipated.

"You, who is in such a state, have you got any other bargaining chip for me?"

After finishing drawing the spell formation, and sizing up the spirit which was repeatedly begging him from within the Confining Spirit Sphere, a curious smile spread across Leylin's face.

“I... I am an outstanding alchemist and have mastered many secrets and special skills in alchemy. If only you let me go, I will hand them all over to you....”

Seeing the resolute expression on Leylin’s face, Roman started to reveal everything that he knew, for a sliver of a chance to stay alive.

“Not enough! Most of your things were already recorded inside that Alchemy book, and these benefits will not be able to compensate for the loss of my Fallen Star Pendant!” Leylin’s face turned icy cold.

“I... I also know of a secret about magicians who advance to an official Magus! If only you swear to let me go, I will tell you! That is something that all the higher ups in the magician guilds have done their best to conceal!”

Chapter 85: Obscurity

“A secret concerning official Magi?”

Leylin smiled, “Don’t tell me you know the spell model of a Rank 1 spell, or the location of some Grine Water and whatnot....”

“You actually know of these....” Roman put on a shocked expression, but very soon it turned into a smirk.

“Yes! Your professor must have definitely told you that to become a Rank 1 Magus, you need a defensive spell model as well as Grine Water, right?”

“Could it be that there is something more to it?” Suddenly Leylin had an ominous feeling.

“Hahaha...” Roman started laughing maniacally, “You have been duped by your professor, or maybe, even your professor doesn’t know of it....”

“Do you know the rankings of official Magi?” After laughing hysterically, Roman suddenly became calm and asked Leylin.

“It seems a Magus is differentiated by 9 ranks. Rank 1 as the lowest, and Rank 9 as the highest. The indication is to release a spell of that rank without any backlash!”

This was some information that Leylin heard from a certain lecturer. However, he had treated it as only a myth. After all, in the whole of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, all the professors were only Rank 1 Magus, save for the chairman who was in the realm of a Rank 2 Magus.

As for Rank 3 Magi, only the heads of powerful guilds such as Lighthouse of the Night had that cultivation.

Leylin was simply unable to comprehend the extent of the power that a Rank 9 Magus could wield.

“It seems as if you have been trying your best to obtain information regarding official Magi....”

Seeing that he had successfully piqued Leylin’s interest, Roman rested lazily against the wall of the crystal ball, and said, “The strength of official Magus, rest on their ability to inscribe a Rank 1 spell successfully in their sea of consciousness, thus turning into their own innate defensive spell! They will then obtain an instantaneous spell casting or the spell will be permanently in effect. Moreover, the consumption is extremely little....”

Leylin nodded his head, the innate spell of official Magi could always be maintained around the surface of their bodies, forming a barrier. This was why the A.I. Chip’s readings were always hindered by these barriers of Magi, thus, it was unable to obtain the data needed.

“After advancing to a Rank 1 Magus, a Magus’ sea of

consciousness will form an innate spell. If this Magus was to advance again, turning into a Rank 2 Magus, he will have to construct a new innate spell. Furthermore, it has to be constructed on the foundation of the original innate spell. Which is to say, a Rank 2 Magus has 2 innate spells, and a Rank 3 Magus has 3 innate spells. If it was a Rank 9 Magus of the legends, they would have 9 innate spells, and the final one is a Rank 9 spell!”

For a chance to survive, Roman divulged a few details known to few.

“Which is to say, if it was a Rank 9 Magus, they can instantaneously cast spells of Rank 1 to 9!”

Leylin felt sluggish. He could not resist even a Rank 1 spell, to say nothing of a Rank 9 spell cast by a Grand Magus.

Once a Magus was able to cast high-level spells instantaneously, it would mean that their battle prowess would be capable of burning down mountains and evaporating the seas.

“And what is this scam that you’re speaking of?”

Leylin asked suddenly.

“Hehe! An innate spell is the root of the Magus’ Spiritual Force. Once constructed, it will be irreversible for eternity. Moreover, the innate spells after the first and original one have to be modelled after it. What would happen if you were to choose your innate spell

wrongly? Two innate spells conflicting with each other in the sea of consciousness will result in a deficient spell as the best case scenario. The most likely event is that your brain will explode like an alchemy bomb. Bang! And off your head goes!”

Roman made an explosive gesture and sniggered.

“This scenario is extremely plausible!” Leylin face darkened.

“So then, where is the crux of this scam?”

“They have concealed the existence of advanced meditation techniques!” Roman hugged his knees as he squatted.

“Advanced meditation techniques?” Leylin’s heart wavered. He had faintly come across information on this, but even if it was his mentor, Kroft, had never seen such advanced source/material like them.

“Yes, advanced meditation techniques completely suit a magician’s Spiritual Force meditation techniques! Not only is the rate faster than those regular meditation techniques in constructing mind runes, they will even naturally form an innate spell in the Magus sea of consciousness on every level!”

“Naturally forming innate spells? You mean....” Leylin’s voice grew weak.

“Indeed, if the advanced meditation techniques were to increase

its level, they will directly raise the rank of a Magus. There wouldn't be any need for Grine Water or spell model!"

Roman smirked. "Also, according to the innate spell formed by the meditation technique, they'd directly complement each other. Not only is there no conflict with the innate spells, the meditation technique will even enhance the effect of the innate spell!"

"Think about it! If you were to use Grine Water to breakthrough, you will realise that your future levels will be extremely difficult to breakthrough. Every time you advance, you would require something more potent and effective than the Grine Water to aid in the advancement. Not only that, you have to scour the lands for an innate spell which does not conflict with the one you already have. This is purely based on luck, and basically it cannot be done!"

"And tens of hundreds of years will pass. The Magi who had cultivated in advanced meditation techniques would have continuously risen in their levels, while you will be on the bottom rung of the hierarchy struggling to survive, finally dying in some corner where nobody cares about...."

More and more cold sweat began to gather on Leylin's forehead.

With his abundant experience, and the calculation done by the A.I. Chip, he knew that what Roman spoke of was 98% authentic.

"The Magus World is indeed ensnared with pitfalls, and not one step can be wrongly taken!"

“So then, you wish to use a part of an advanced meditation technique to exchange for your petty life?” Leylin deeply inhaled for a few breaths, before asking Roman.

“Indeed, once you swear before the witness of the Trial’s Eye, I will hand over the location of one of these advanced meditation techniques!”

Roman howled, “If you won’t let me go, then never think of getting that piece of advanced meditation technique!”

“Has that advanced meditation technique got to do with the Great Magus Serholm?” Leylin fell silent for a while before he suddenly asked.

“You know about it? That’s right, you have been to that lab too, and it seems that you have discovered some information!” Roman was a little shocked, before putting on a nonchalant air.

“But so what? A part of an advanced meditation technique is indeed enough to redeem my life!”

“Alright!” Leylin fell into silence for a while, before finally agreeing.

Following which, he chanted a mysterious incantation.

This incantation was an extreme tongue twister, and there were many pauses. It required a huge amount of Magic Power before the chant was finished.

Leylin was only able to use this incantation after advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte.

Following the enunciation of the final syllable, an energy wave came from the void, and the surrounding light dimmed. In the air above of that experiment table, a mysterious vertical eye appeared.

This vertical eye's iris was pitch black, with its pupils dyed a crimson-red. Under its gaze, Leylin's body shuddered, as if not wearing any clothes. All of his secrets seemed to have been exposed to it.

“A.I. Chip! Scan!”

Leylin ordered from the bottom of his heart, yet he did not receive any response.

It seems like the current ability of the A.I. Chip was still unable to detect such a strange entity like the Trial's Eye. Even if it was only a secondary body that did not even contain a billionth of the main body's might.

“With the Trial's Eye as a witness, I, Leylin Farlier, will immediately release Roman from the Confining Spirit Sphere once Roman tells me the information regarding the advanced

meditation technique.

Leylin spoke slowly using the Byron Language.

The moment Leylin finished his oath; the Trial's Eye turned into a black light, and separately entered each of Leylin's and Roman's foreheads.

“Alright! I have done as you requested, hurry and tell me the location of the advanced meditation technique!”

Impatience surfaced on Leylin's face.

“Alright! Regarding the advanced meditation technique, actually, I don't know much of it. Only that every advanced meditation technique have different requirements for the cultivator's affinity and soul aptitude.”

“As for me, I have read it from a piece of writing left by a Magus, the lead to the lab of the Great Magus Serholm. I also know that he left the legacy of the advanced meditation technique in a certain lab!”

Under the constraints of the Trial's Eye, Roman began to spill everything he knew.

“There is a requirement for the cultivators, how about the requirements for the meditation technique?” Leylin asked.

“I don’t know. With my ability as a Level 3 Acolyte, obtaining the location of a piece of meditation technique is already extremely lucky, so how can I have more extravagant demands? Eventually, I hastily went to explore the lab, only to end up dying within it!”

Roman smiled sardonically.

“So then, tell me the location of that meditation technique!” Leylin’s face was impassive as he spoke in a low tone.

“On that piece of broken page, I obtained a few locations. The previous location is crossed out now, so that leaves only one. It is the Dylan Gardens which rests within the Zither Moon Mountain Plains!”

“Zither Moon Mountain Plains, Dylan Gardens?”

Leylin suddenly thought of this place that he had come across in his previous exploration. “So the Dylan Gardens was situated on the Zither Moon Mountain Plains, huh?”

“All I know are these, hurry and let me out!” Roman howled.

“Alright! I will let you out now. Under the constraints of the Trial’s Eye, I will dare not offend!”

Leylin smiled and snapped his fingers.

Boom!

The whole Confining Spirit Sphere shattered into pieces, revealing the translucent spirit body within.

At the same time, two rays of light flew out from Leylin's and Roman's body. This proved that the agreement with the Trial's Eye has already been fulfilled by Leylin.

“Haha! I'm free! I'm free!”

Roman shouted.

“Yes! I have abided by my promise, and released you from the Confining Spirit Sphere! Now, we are even!”

Leylin suddenly waved his hands and activated the spell formation.

Bang!

In an instant, the spell runes on the experiment table irradiated with light, engulfing Roman within.

“What happened? You! How can you escape from the binding agreement!”

Roman's face was in utter shock.

Chapter 86: Fallen Star Pendant

“I have already abided by my agreement and released you from the Confining Spirit Sphere. What happens next is not a part of the contract!”

Leylin’s voice was extremely unconcerned.

This was just simple wordplay. Magicians were all intelligent people, and could not be lied to easily.

However, Roman was different. He had already died a long time ago, and his spirit body had transformed into a vengeful spirit. Naturally, his intelligence could not even be comparable to that of an average human.

Moreover, after spending so much time inside the lab, Leylin had been diligently exercising various methods to reduce Roman’s intelligence, making him more muddled, in order to interrogate him.

As expected, even if Roman had unexpectedly regained his intelligence today under the brink of his death, he was still manipulated by Leylin and gave away the important information to the advanced meditation technique.

“Even for me, as of now, a Level 3 Acolyte spirit body is extremely hard to acquire, so how could I let you leave?”

Leylin did not bother paying attention to Roman's curses, and placed the silver cross in the centre of the runes, as he began to complete the final step for the Fallen Star Pendant.

The Fallen Star Pendant came from a derelict page in the Lowian Academy Teachings. After having been decrypted by the A.I. Chip, together with the Alchemy diary found on Roman's corpse, Leylin was able to deduce the correct procedure for synthesizing it.

After advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte, Leylin had dedicated most of his time and effort on synthesizing this low-grade Magic Artifact.

After costing Leylin a large amount of Magic Crystals and ingredients, the Fallen Star Pendant was almost completed, where the final step remained - spirit awakening!"

According to Leylin's deductions and the A.I. Chip's calculations, the final step, the spirit awakening, had already involved the aspect of spirit and was something that he could not resolve then.

However, Leylin sought a huge number of living bodies from Viscount Jackson of Extreme Night City as a main material in observing the soul.

After many years of research, Leylin could already confirm that within Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, he would be the foremost regarding the topic of soul research, and might even surpass many Magi.

After so many experiments, the spirit awakening step did not pose a problem for Leylin.

However, he had no leads on the other ancient formula that he obtained from Kroft, Tears of Mary, up till now.

Leylin's guess was that this formula was meant for an official Magus, something which an acolyte could not get involved with yet.

“For the Spirit awakening, a stronger spirit body is not necessarily better. According to the A.I. Chip's simulation and my own deductions, a Level 3 Acolyte would be the most suitable for it....”

Leylin looked at the vengeful spirit, Roman, who was writhing and cursing him on the light formation.

“For a long time, I have deliberately calibrated Roman's spirit strength to be compatible with the final step. As long as I am able to complete the spirit awakening, the Magic Artifact that I get will definitely be perfect!”

This was the trump card that Leylin had prepared for the upcoming bloodbath.

A low-grade Magic Artifact did not exceed the boundaries of an official Magus. However, for acolytes, it was almost impossible for them to destroy the defense on this Magic Artifact.

As long as Leylin had that pendant, his safety in the bloodbath would be greatly increased.

“Let me go! You promised me!”

Roman who was trapped within the spell formation continuously howled.

At the end, the vengeful spirit Roman cursed in a low tone, “Despicable miscreant, I curse you....”

“Enough of your nonsense!” Leylin’s brow furrowed and he poured a silver liquid directly onto the Fallen Star Pendant.

Sssii!

A cloud of white smoke rose from the silver necklace, and the white mist in the air transformed into a large jaw lined with razor sharp teeth, which bit at Roman directly.

Ka-cha!

Roman was immediately eaten by the large malevolent mouth, which it opened and closed as if enjoying the aftertaste.

Leylin stared at the large mouth, and after seeing that Roman was completely devoured, he began to chant an incantation.

The chanting voice reverberated around the area, and Leylin's spell formation that he drew on the experiment lab began to shrink to the centre, and finally, it all transferred onto the Fallen Star Pendant.

With the convergence of the runes, the patterns on the silver cross seemed more detailed and glowed with mysterious colours of light.

“Seal!”

Leylin fixed his gaze on the cross. When the runes were all accepted by the silver Fallen Star Pendant, he pointed at the huge mouth in midair.

Pu! A sound similar to a bubble popping sounded.

The white mouth was directly dispersed, and threads of white gaseous bodies were emitted. In the centre of them were many strands of black colour, which continuously fell onto the silver cross.

“With my name, Leylin Farlier, Fallen Star Pendant, shimmer!”

Leylin's expression was solemn, and he bit his fingers, dripping a droplet of blood onto the Fallen Star Pendant.

The red jewel in the silver cross sparkled and directly sucked Leylin's blood into it.

Bang! A strong suction force appeared from the Fallen Star Pendant, circling around the surface of the silver cross and forming a whirlwind. It directly sucked in all of the black and white gaseous compounds.

The thick mist enveloped the silver cross within, and it floated in midair, becoming a luminescent ball of black and white.

“Very good! The awakening phase is activated, and everything has been going smoothly without a hitch so far!”

Leylin looked at the glowing ball in midair, his eyes holding a fervent gaze. “What's next, is....”

On the second morning, Leylin stared at a silver cross held in his palm, his face revealing an elated expression.

At this moment, the Fallen Star Pendant was a silver grey colour, and the jewels also seemed dull and without lustre. Based on outer appearances alone, it could not even be compared to the previous half completed item. However the A.I. Chip's indication made Leylin feel ecstatic.

[Beep! Low-grade Magic Artifact - Fallen Star Pendant has been successfully synthesized!]

[Fallen Star Pendant - Low-grade Magic Artifact. Main components used for defence: Stellar Alloy, Manfayla Rock, Mankestre Bone Marrow....]

[Physical Defence: 13 degrees, Magical Defence: 15 degrees. Instant activation when Host is attacked!]

The various stats shown on the A.I. Chip made Leylin extremely ecstatic. A defence Magic Artifact could not even be bought in the market.

Normally speaking, the attack of a Level 3 Acolyte was around 10 degrees or so. Only official Magi and above would be able to cast a magic spell of over 20 degrees.

With the Fallen Star Pendant in hand, while it still had energy, Leylin could completely ignore the attacks of Level 1 and Level 2 Acolytes. Together with the Trevor's Revolving Shield Potion, Leylin would be able to endure a barrage of attacks even if it came from a Level 3 Acolyte.

One could say that with the successful synthesis of the Fallen Star Pendant, Leylin's survival was assured.

"This Magic Artifact is like a simplified version of an official Magus' defensive force field!" Suddenly Leylin exclaimed.

Reverence and respect for magicians uncontrollably welled up in Leylin's heart even more.

The continued tradition of the Magus World was only in recent times, for about 1000 years. Before this, there were even the glorified and magnificent ancient times of the past. Back in the ancient past, the primordial and immemorial past, there was a countless accumulation of time, yet how many from these periods were geniuses? How many had invented mysterious spells?

Only by standing on a giant's shoulder, one could see the road ahead clearly, strive hard and advance!

Even with the A.I. Chip, Leylin only had a better foundation than other magicians. On the path of a Magus, he still required to rely on the experiences of his predecessors and improve both himself and his abilities.

After sighing, Leylin hung the silver grey cross on his neck.

The ice cold pendant came into direct contact with the skin, and Leylin pulled up his collar. This way, no one could tell that Leylin was wearing a pendant just by looking at the surface.

“With the Fallen Star Pendant, my defense is guaranteed. What's next is to make use of the A.I. Chip to come up with a combination of a few strong Rank 0 spells to be used in the bloodbath.

Although Leylin believed Roman's words, with the current rewards, he wouldn't let it go.

His previous plan was to obtain the Grine Water through the bloodbath, and right now he did not plan to give up.

After all, he still couldn't defeat any Rank 1 Magi. Under the compulsion of the academy and professors, he still needed to join the bloodbath in the secret plane.

Dong Dong Dong!

Just when Leylin was deep in thought, a patterned knocking on the door sounded.

“Please enter!” Leylin hurriedly removed the traces of his work in the lab and arranged his clothes before he spoke.

Creak!

The wooden door was pushed open, and at that moment, when Bicky who wore a green dress, walked in, a scented fragrance wafted in and infiltrated Leylin's nose.

“Leylin! Mentor has asked me to get you to register for the upcoming school competition....”

Bicky toyed with a white flower in her hands.

Before the bloodbath, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had already spared no hesitation in nurturing its acolytes. The prices of

various ingredients and spell models had plunged, and they had also hosted many competitions before the bloodbath.

Only with participation, there would be generous rewards, such as Magic Crystals, spell models, ingredients and the like.

As for the top few ranks, they were even given scrolls of spells and attack type potions as rewards.

However, Leylin did not lack Magic Crystals, and he could also brew attack type potions for himself. As for the reward for the champion, it was not a Magic Artifact, so he was not attracted in the slightest.

However, he still had to, at least, show some superficial effort. Leylin nodded his head and walked out of the dorm with Bicky.

After not seeing her for 3 years, the girl from before had turned into a beautiful young lady. Bicky was silent as she led the way. Leylin opened his mouth but did not know what to say.

The two walked through the garden zone, and Bicky smiled and said, “Leylin! You know what? Fayle has already agreed to let me be his girlfriend!”

Saying which, Leylin acutely discovered a peculiar expression from within Bicky’s eyes.

“Oh really? Congratulations!”

Leylin had known of Bicky crush on Fayle it since the very first day he entered. After seeing his good friend fulfilling what she wished for, he was somewhat happy for Bicky.

At the same time, he was somewhat worried. He had some understanding towards Fayle's character and knew that Fayle liked to be in the limelight. On top of that, Fayle was rather vain. However, after seeing Bicky's smiling expression, Leylin still chose to maintain his silence.

Chapter 87: Competition

“The registration area is just ahead!”

After walking through the garden zone, Bicky took the initiative to familiarize Leylin with the registration area.

“The academy competitions are split into many categories. There are some potion brewing ones, some for harvesting plants, and other lesser known subjects. However, the liveliest event is still the fighting competition. Any acolyte is able to join, and the reward is the most generous!”

“Although the acolytes are able to participate in many events, Professor Kroft said that you had better join the potion brewing event!”

Bicky looked at Leylin, not masking her worried expression.

“Don’t worry; I am only prepared to join the potion brewing event!” Leylin smiled as he consoled Bicky.

Leylin did not want to compete head on with those genius fifth-grade acolytes. Behind them were the support of many professors, and they would definitely carry Magic Artifacts with them.

Moreover, the battle prize was not attractive to him at all. This prize was obviously prepared as a final chance to give to those average acolytes.

Although Leylin came only as a mere formality, naturally he had to choose the simplest way to do it.

The front of the education area was lined with several black desks. The banner behind them had words like Potioneering and Fighting.

Many acolytes were crowding around the tables to register.

Looking on, it seemed like they were acolytes who had recently rushed back to the academy.

Leylin thought for a while before directly registering for the Potioneering battle.

“Hold on to this! Your assigned number is 32, and the competition will start tomorrow afternoon at 3 o’clock. Please be punctual and come to the large hall in experiment zone 13 in order to participate!”

The administrative staff wearing grey robes handed a parchment paper over to Leylin, and also routinely gave him a numbered card.

“Next!”

With the impatient voice of the grey-robed person sounding, Leylin rubbed his nose, shook his head, and walked away.

“Let’s go to the restaurant to celebrate!” Leylin said to Bicky, who was beside him.

“It’s better if I pay for it, as a celebration for us meeting again after such a long time!” Bicky’s face revealed a joyous expression.

.....

On the second day, Leylin arrived 5 minutes earlier at Hall 13.

At this moment, many Potioneering acolytes were already waiting here. Some recognised Leylin and smiled as they greeted him while some faces were extremely unfamiliar.

This was not strange, as most magicians holed themselves up, often staying in their experiment labs to conduct experiments, especially those who practiced Potioneering and Alchemy.

Merlin and Bicky also entered the crowd, smiling at Leylin.

Ding Ling Ling! With a crisp bell sound, a black-robed figure emerged from the crowd.

“Official Magus!” Leylin exclaimed silently. Although he was not the same as before, compared to an official Magus, he was still an ant.

The A.I. Chip was also helpless, as it was blocked by the defensive force field surrounding the official Magus.

“All of you, enter the main hall and go to your respective allocated areas as is indicated by your card number. I will only wait for 5 minutes, and those who aren’t there by then will be immediately disqualified!”

The black robed figure’s voice was extremely hoarse and unpleasing to the ears.

After finishing his speech, the black-robed Magus shook his robe, and his body split apart, turning into innumerable bats, which flew away.

The acolytes that were present looked each other in the eye.

Bang! Not knowing who made the first move, the whole hall clamoured and squeezed through into the main hall.

Although Leylin was not in a hurry, his body was involuntarily pushed into the hall with the crowd.

With a great effort, he managed to get to his experiment table.

The number 32 was scribbled on the corner of a pure white table. There were also a few herbs, ingredients and a piece of parchment paper on the table. With just a whiff Leylin knew that these were the necessary ingredients for a healing potion.

“Five minutes are up, any acolyte who has not found their place is deemed disqualified!”

The black robed Magus’ voice sounded again. At the same time, there were cries from many acolytes.

Leylin saw an unlucky fellow beside him, who was just one step away from his table, grabbed by a black bat and thrown outside of the hall.

“The topic, this time, is to brew a healing potion! The formula and ingredients are on the experiment table, and you will have 3 hours....”

After dealing with the group of disqualified acolytes, the black robed Magus’ voice sounded yet again.

“Your every move is under my vigilance, so do not try to cheat your way through it. If not, I will educate you on a lesson of blood!”

“As expected!” Leylin picked up the parchment paper, and it was indeed the formula of a healing potion.

“Such an elementary potion like this, I have brewed it so many times that I could vomit !”

Leylin felt extremely frustrated, but he still skillfully picked up a beaker...

To an outsider, Leylin's every movement now was textbook standard. His arms were strong, and they did not quiver. During the process of brewing, every action was filled with a unique aesthetic movement.

Drip!

A drop of green liquid was placed into a test tube, and the whole test tube momentarily turned red.

"It's completed!" Leylin looked at the A.I. Chip's recording time, "1 hour 20 minutes? It seems like I have become a little bit rusty!"

"En! Very good, it's completed!"

A black bat immediately flew onto Leylin's experiment table and scrutinised Leylin's potion.

"Sir!" Leylin hurriedly bowed.

"I recognise you! Aren't you Leylin? The apprentice of that old geezer Kroft! The heavens are really unfair; he already had such an outstanding apprentice, Merlin, yet now, it even sent you to him...."

The bat seemed to recognise Kroft, and muttered by the side. Leylin maintained his silence throughout.

Leylin had no thoughts of establishing a relationship with a Magus, and he did not have the ability to do so either.

“Alright! Let me sniff the potion!

It could be seen that after seeing Leylin keep his silence like a log, the bat cursed for a while before suddenly speaking.

Leylin opened the plug on the test tube and placed it below the bat’s head.

“En! Healing potion! The quality is excellent! Kiddo, you have passed!”

The bat somewhat regretfully flew away, and let off an unpleasant voice, “Leylin! Consider changing professors and joining me....”

Towards this, Leylin could only smile wryly.

.....

The Potioneering competition carried on for two days and one night.

Fortunately, the acolytes could all manipulate the energy particles to strengthen their bodies, so they could endure throughout the entirety of the competition.

Leylin had also been brewing potions in these two days.

Along with the intensity of the competition, the topics given by the academy became more and more difficult. Bicky had already been eliminated in the third round. At the very end, they moved on to beginner potions.

Through these series of tests, Leylin distinguished himself above the rest, and stormed through the competition with his senior, Merlin.

As for the contents of the finals, it was to brew a Hofdor's Water of Radiance. This was a kind of healing potion that was able to treat injuries caused by negative energy spells. Even amongst the beginner potions, it was known to be extremely difficult to brew.

Although Leylin had the confidence to brew it successfully with the A.I. Chip, for concealment reasons, he spontaneously pretended to make a mistake, and lost to Merlin, taking second place.

Deep in the night, Leylin returned to his dorm, and tossed the second prize reward, a Fiery Combustion Potion, aside.

This type of attack potion had a might of 8 to 9 degrees, which

could be considered to be an extremely remarkable trump card for a Level 3 Acolyte. However, it was not worthy in Leylin's eyes.

Since a year ago, he could already brew a potion like this on his own.

“It's finally over. What's left is to wholeheartedly prepare for the secret plane bloodbath!”

Concerning the bloodbath between the few academies, it couldn't just be glossed over hastily like the academy competitions.

Even during the intra-school fighting competition, there was only a loss of a few acolytes' lives due to mishaps.

However, during the bloodbath, it was two against one, and their enemy's goal was to eradicate the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

Dong Dong Dong!

While deep in thought, Leylin heard a knocking noise outside the door.

“Who is it? It's so late already!” Leylin was rather unhappy as he opened the door.

“It's me!” Outside the door, there was a girl wrapped in a cloak, and her voice sounded coquettish.

“You are... Bick...” Before Leylin could finish, his lips were already sealed. The door closed and the cloak slipped off, revealing an ample yet provocative and naked body.

“This is... What’s happening?”

After Leylin recovered his senses, he was already lying on his own bed, with a girl continuously writhing on top of him.

Feeling the pleasure underneath his body, Leylin resisted his urges and temptation to touch Bicky’s waist, which made her stop in her movements, “Why are you doing this?”

“Because... I can’t think of a better way to console you! Leylin! Don’t be upset! The loss is only temporary...”

Bicky pouted lovably.

“I...”

Leylin was extremely at a loss for words. If he could look in the mirror, he would definitely be putting on a wry smile.

He deliberately lost on purpose, yet he did not think that this silly girl Bicky would actually be fooled by him. Thinking that he would be devastated, she offered herself to ‘console’ him.

At the same time, Leylin lost all his hopes towards the wanton practices in this world.

“Alright then! How about Fayle? Aren’t you his girlfriend?”

Leylin asked.

“He wouldn’t know. Besides, before marriage, I have my freedom!” Bicky revealed a coquettish smile and gradually started to thrust her waist again.

“So then, what happens after marriage?” Leylin was somewhat unhappy and quickened his motions.

The delicate beauty panted for a while before speaking with great effort, “Ma... After marriage, I have to guard my body for Fayle!”

Leylin then performed another deep penetrating thrust, which made Bicky moan with a shrill voice. She then collapsed in Leylin’s embrace, as if all the bones in her body were removed.

“You are really... Alright then! After I have borne a child for Fayle and confirmed with a blood test, whenever you want it, you can look for me...”

Bicky’s face blushed, and buried her head in Leylin’s arms.

“What is this? I let Fayle wear a green hat in advance?”

Leylin thought at the back of his mind, as his hands involuntarily grabbed on Bicky's peaks of abundance, and began to move wildly.

In the morning, Leylin stroked the bare body of the girl, and he did not know whether to laugh or cry, "I never thought that I would become a friend with benefits...."

Chapter 88: The Bloodbath Begins

Looking at Bicky lying in his arms, Leylin's expression was complicated.

Regarding the fact that she threw herself at him the previous night, Leylin guessed that there were a few reasons behind it. First it was that Bicky had a favourable impression of him. As she did not have the heart to watch him be defeated, she came here to console him. The second was that this world's practices were generally more open, and Bicky wasn't a virgin before she did it with him - she had obviously had intercourse before. Finally, due to the bloodbath that was drawing closer, she was restless mentally, so her subconscious mind made the decision to do some stimulating activities and thus vent her frustration.

However, no matter what the reasons were, Bicky was a beauty, and Leylin was not on the losing end.

"Ah?!" Suddenly, the female body on Leylin shook, and sat upright.

"What time is it? It's actually 7 o'clock. Not good, I have to go to Mentor's experiment lab...."

Bicky hurriedly left the bed, and revealed that exquisite body once again to Leylin. She quickly did the buttons on her robes, before giving Leylin a light peck on his cheeks and then scurrying out of the room.

“Really....” Leylin looked at Bicky’s departing figure and smiled wryly.

Very soon, the romance of last night was thrown to the back of Leylin’s mind.

The secret plane bloodbath drew closer - it was one which none of the acolytes in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy could avoid.

Especially those fifth-grade acolytes with genius aptitude, they were the target of the opposing academies.

On the contrary, Leylin only had some talent in Potioneering; furthermore he had his senior Merlin to garner all unwanted attention, so he would not be in the limelight.

This was one of the reasons why Leylin never revealed his true abilities.

What followed next was Leylin holing up in his experiment lab, familiarising himself with the Fallen Star Pendant, and using the A.I. Chip to analyse the spell models. Also, he simulated those Rank 0 spells with high degrees of attack to be used in conjunction with his attack potions, in preparation for the secret plane bloodbath.

.....

The clouds were a patch of grey, and from time to time it

drizzled, which made people feel like shadow was looming over them on the horizon.

Acolytes wearing grey robes were crammed into a field full of wild grasses. Each of them had a solemn expression, and their eyes brought possible vicious or vacant looks.

A few black and white robed official Magi stood before them.

Leylin stood somewhere at the corner of the acolytes and maintained a low profile, and now and then stole glances at the professors in front of him.

At the forefront of the professors was a large bloke - wearing black robes - who stood still, and subconsciously, strands of energy waves radiated out from his body which made Leylin's Spiritual Force circulation feel rather sluggish.

“That person is definitely the chairman of our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, a Rank 2 Magus of the legends!”

Leylin bowed his head lower, not daring to raise his head again.

As for the desire to use the A.I. Chip to scan, Leylin buried it deep within his heart. The might of a Rank 2 Magus was extremely mysterious, and Leylin had no confidence in concealing this A.I. Chip from him.

Moreover, right now the A.I. Chip could not even break past the

barriers of a Rank 1 Magus, so he needn't embarrass himself further.

“But... are we activating the secret plane right here?”

Leylin looked at the surroundings. Under the dimly-lit sky, the field was dead silent, the rodents and lizards as if discovering a great battle was coming, had long since left the place.

Amongst the acolytes, Leylin even saw Bicky, Merlin, Nyssa, Jayden and the like.

Jayden stood at the forefront of the acolytes, and his face was extremely gloomy. There were thick, dark circles around his eyes, and it seemed that his condition was not too great.

Nyssa stood at the end of the crowd, and her whole figure was draped in grey robes, which was extremely low profile.

As for Bicky and Merlin, they were muttering to each other.

After seeing Leylin, Bicky even gave him a smile.

“Bicky has a few attack potions that I gave her, and she isn't an important target, so most likely she'll be alright!”

Leylin comforted himself.

“They’re here! They’re here!”

Suddenly, a ruckus was caused amongst the acolytes, which broke Leylin’s train of thoughts.

Leylin inhaled a mouthful of air and raised his head to look at the distance.

On the far horizon, a black spot suddenly appeared. With the black spot gradually approaching, its size, too, grew larger and larger.

When the black spot arrived in front of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s representatives, Leylin managed to see the full appearance of this creature.

It was a giant beetle, with eight long and sturdy legs. Each of them was over a dozen metres long. On top of the tiny head of the beetle, was a pair of compound eyes which was looking down on the masses of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

[The target has a layer of defensive barrier, and is primarily categorized as a Rank 1 Magus. Host is recommended to stay far away from the target]

At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned, which made Leylin realise how formidable this beetle was.

“Sssii!”

From the giant beetle, a few drops of yellowish green saliva drooled from its mouth, which fell onto the ground corroding a large pit.

The surrounding acolytes backed away in unison. Their faces were pale, seemingly shocked by it.

“What are you afraid of? It’s just an Abyss Steeled-Back Beetle!”

“Silence!”

Under the restrictions set by the professors in front, the acolytes then gradually recovered from their fright.

“Siley, your acolytes were actually frightened by my baby. It seems like their predicament isn’t very good right now! Hahaha....”

A crisp male voice sounded, following which a white-robed, middle-aged Magus jumped off the back of the beetle. Although he had a middle-aged look, his brows were snow white.

“Hng!” Seemingly unhappy with the other party’s taunt, the bald chairman Siley coldly harrumphed.

However, from the A.I. Chip’s detection, Leylin saw that a formless energy wave was radiated from Siley’s body towards the

beetle.

“Wu!” “Arghh!” A few frightened voices came from the back of the beetle, and it seemed to be made by youngsters.

“Siley! You actually....” The white-browed Magus was in rage, and his brows suddenly turned red, as if blood was going to drip down from it.

“How is it?” Chairman Siley stepped forward as if being overbearing.

“That white-browed, middle-aged man should be the chairman of Sage Gotham’s Hut. Although he is also a Rank 2 Magus, Chairman Siley is a Dark Magus, excelled in the art of combat, so his strength is definitely stronger than White Brows. . . ”

Leylin’s eyes flashed.

Just when the acolytes thought that these two Chairmen were about to battle, a whizzing sound travelled from the sky.

An enormous horse carriage that stretched over a few dozen metres, with a pair of snow white wings on each side, gradually descended under the control of a few condors.

Bang!

The horse carriage landed steadily on the ground. The door opened, and a white-robed, golden-haired lady walked out from it.

“Guru, stop! Don’t forget we have signed an agreement!”

Listening to the golden-haired lady, Siley and Guru scoffed and returned back to their respective groups.

Behind the golden-haired lady, a group of acolytes came out from the horse carriage. Their bodies evidently radiated strong energy waves.

“Hehe! Siley, I hope your acolytes will be able to survive. Don’t let your academy turn into a real graveyard...”

White-Brows Guru sneered. Behind him, the beetle gradually folded its legs, which formed a flight of steps, where many acolytes stepped down from it.

The acolytes from both academies looked at Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s camp menacingly, as if the acolytes here were all preys.

“Most of them are Level 3 Acolyte, and there is a rare number of Level 2 Acolyte. As for Level 1 Acolyte, there isn’t any!”

Leylin’s heart tightened. Due to the weakening state of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the rules in the bloodbath were obviously not favourable to them.

Not only were they two against one, but the other side could let their Level 1 Acolyte be excluded from the bloodbath. Unlike Abyssal Bone Forest Academy where all their acolytes had to enter.

These Level 1 Acolyte could only play the role of cannon fodder when they entered, and were absolutely of no further use.

“After this mandatory enlistment, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy will definitely be worse off!”

Leylin looked at the acolytes in his academy that were of 11-12 years of age, and sighed within his heart.

However, Leylin could not offer any assistance to them at all. At the very most, under the circumstances that his life wasn't threatened, he would do his best to help them.

Right now, he had something more important to tend to.

“A.I. Chip, assist in the recording!”

Right now Leylin was a Level 3 Acolyte and the A.I. Chip's ability increased too. Most of the Level 3 Acolyte could not escape the A.I. Chip's detection now.

Leylin picked out the acolytes who carried Magic Artifacts. No matter if it was his own side or the other, he recorded them down.

These people were the ones that he had to be mindful of during the bloodbath.

Listening to the provocative tone of the other party, Chairman Siley's face darkened. He waved his hands, "Enough of this nonsense, let us begin!"

"Since you have such sincerity, how could we bear to refuse your request?"

White-Brows Guru and the golden-haired lady smirked and nodded their heads, "Let us begin!"

Listening to their chairmen, the official Magi from the respective academies stepped forward and begin to retrieve many strange things from their sacks, robes or even within their bodies. After which, they began to set up a formation.

When they were finished with it, a strange magic formation was arranged on the ground.

"They are runes that make the foundation sturdy, linking up of energy and creating flames. I recognise some of these!" Leylin's eyes flashed, and recorded down all of these formations with the A.I. Chip.

As for the three chairmen, after their staff had finished preparing the formation, they each stepped forward and withdrew 3 crimson

coloured scrolls.

“With my name, Siley, I summon the Will of Battle which is roving around the wilderness, and activate the glorious and deathly flight of stairs....”

The 3 chairmen chanted and simultaneously tore the scrolls in their hands apart.

Bang! Crimson lightning continuously thundered down, on the area above where the 3 crimson scrolls were torn, a huge opening suddenly appeared from the void.

Whoosh! Countless thunder and lightning appeared from within, and noises of explosion and whistling came from the opening.

Dozens of seconds later, the void calmed down.

“This is a secret plane which is now an abandoned resources point. Any organisms and resources of value in it were scoured clean by us. Right now, it will become your battlefield....”

Chapter 89: Entering The Secret Plane

Chairman Siley turned around and said to Leylin and the group of acolytes, “You are all the most outstanding students of my Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, who have experienced deaths with blood and fire. You are not just a flower that is nurtured in a greenhouse, but ferocious young lions. I want you to seek your preys, stalk them, and ambush them. Finally, rip them to shreds!”

After finishing the last sentence, Chairman Siley’s eyes turned a crimson red, and a blood red light was radiated, making his seem seemed somewhat contorted.

Leylin’s face was extremely solemn, and he did not know how to react to this anymore.

Following which, the chairman promised many different rewards. They were all involving precious resources and advanced information that would be given as a bounty whenever the opposing acolytes were slain. This made the acolytes face gleam with greed.

“As per rumours, our chairman is indeed an extremely aggressive person!” Leylin thought, “I wonder how long this group of people will last?”

On the other side, the chairman of Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle were also giving their speech. Although their acolytes were cheering loudly and nodding their heads vigorously, Leylin was in glee.

The academies in the South Coast had been influenced by the styles of their respective headmasters. Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was advocating a more bloodthirsty and theory of the law of the jungle. Overall, it was leaning towards the side of Dark Magi.

As for the two opposing factions, they were obviously leaning more towards Light Magi types. Although many acolytes were already Level 3 Acolyte, Leylin did not see the astuteness and craftiness in their eyes. Many of them even seemed innocent, which was extremely similar to the acolytes that were in Extreme Night City.

“If it’s this way, there is still a chance!”

Leylin’s eyes gleamed. His target was only to gather enough contribution points in exchange for Grine Water, so he had no reason to create more trouble for himself.

As for the price of Grine Water, it was 50 contribution points. This is to say, Leylin had to kill 5 Level 3 Acolytes on the other side, or even more Level 2 Acolytes, before gathering enough points.

“The acolytes do not have the defensive force field that an official Magus has. If only I have time, I can analyse and choose my opponents, giving me enough contribution points!”

Leylin sized up the opposing acolytes and eyed some of the Level 3 Acolytes who obviously had low energy waves.

They will be his prey!

“Alright! This secret plane will hold on for 3 days. In these 3 days, you will all be transported to different places in the secret plane. Protect your chest badges well. They are proof of your contributions and contains information on the return route!”

Siley waved his hands, and the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes formed a long line, entering the entrance of the secret plane in an orderly fashion.

Under the mediation of Lighthouse of the Night, it obtained a few benefits. For example, they could enter the secret plane first, giving them a territorial advantage.

However, Leylin understood that in front of his opponents' immense force, this little benefit for Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is simply a joke!

The acolytes on both sides numbered almost the same, at 200 or so. However, the amount of Level 3 Acolyte on their side was at least 5 to 6 times more than what Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had.

As for the acolytes of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, not to mention that most of them perished in the war, many of them could not make it back in time. Some even betrayed the academy and were killed while escaping. Such a result made Abyssal Bone Forest Academy inferior to the enemy in terms of elite forces.

Under these circumstances, the chairman of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy still provoked the enemy in such a fashion. This made Leylin convinced of a rumour - The cause of this war was exactly the provocation by this Chairman Siley.

As Leylin pondered on, he followed the acolyte in front of him into the secret plane.

.....

Weng!

After entering the plane, Leylin's sight turned black. When he regained his senses, he was already standing on an unfamiliar plot of land.

He felt dizzy, as if there were millions of bees flapping their wings. Leylin's face contorted, almost puking.

[A negative effect is discovered on the Host. The symptoms are dizziness and vomiting. The primary diagnosis is that it is the aftereffect from travelling through spatial areas!]

The A.I. Chip's voice intoned. Leylin slapped his forehead, and opened his water bottle, splashing the cold water on his face, which made him feel much better.

Looking the surroundings, what entered his sight were some small trees and shrubberies. There were always a few unknown fruit trees grown. On them were a type of purple-red fruit, and was slightly hairy on the surface.

“A.I. Chip, scan the surroundings!”

Leylin ordered. Immediately, a light blue 3D image was projected in front of Leylin’s eyes.

“There doesn’t seem to be any danger!” Leylin nodded his head and chanted an incantation.

Along with the chanting noise, Leylin’s face took on a morphing process. His eyes became larger, his lips paler, his hair changed colour, as if a totally different person. Even his height was shorter by a few inches.

What was surprising was that after this Rank 0 spell, the energy waves from Leylin’s body gradually weakened. It regressed from a Level 3 Acolyte to that of a Level 1 Acolyte slowly.

[Shapeshifting spell (Modified), able to the change the height and appearance of a person, even the energy waves radiation! Consumption: 3 Magic Power, 3 Spiritual Force!]

Shapeshifting spell was a spell that Leylin specially chose back when he was leaving the academy.

After he advanced into a Level 3 Acolyte, he managed to reach the requirements for the A.I. Chip to make modifications to it. Back in Extreme Night City, he had already completed the modification for this Shapeshifting spell.

Of course, no matter how much the A.I. Chip modified it, the Shapeshifting spell was after all a Rank 0 spell. It could only conceal his energy from acolytes, but not the detection from official Magi. If not, Leylin could have used the spell to make himself be a Level 2 Acolyte when he returned.

Moreover, the Shapeshifting spell could only slightly lower the energy waves, allowing him to pass off as a low-level acolyte. It could not be used to conceal as a regular human or official Magus.

However, the bloodbath in the secret plane was only for acolytes. So the disguise would not be found out by other acolytes.

“It’s done!” Leylin looked at his reflection in a mirror.

A blonde male acolyte, with the energy wave of a Level 1 Acolyte. Under this state, even if it was Bicky or Merlin, they wouldn’t be able to recognise him.

“However, a person’s habit cannot be changed so easily. I had better avoid meeting any familiar people. ”

Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he disappeared into the shrubbery.

.....

As for other places in the secret plane, many acolytes had already begun to face off and there were several explosive yet short-lived battles.

Beside a small pool, a black haired acolyte with a black cloak used lightning to obliterate an Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolyte into ashes.

On the other side of the plane, Jayden's expression darkened, and suddenly countless vines shot out from his body, wrapping around an opposing acolyte from Whitewoods Castle into a ball of vines. Along with the contraction of the vine, fresh blood seeped through from the gaps of the vine, falling drop by drop on the floor.

Battles like these happened constantly throughout the plane. On the whole, the Level 3 Acolytes from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy has an advantage in 1 versus 1 combat. As for other Level 1 and 2 acolytes, if they meet with these Level 3 Acolytes they would be killed immediately.

A pockmarked brown haired acolyte wore the uniform of Sage Gotham's Hut. His eyes were not big, but it was filled with anxiety and wariness, as he continuously scanned the surroundings.

"Damn it! I was actually sent here. The distance from the gathering point with the academy is too far..."

The acolyte hurried his step as he berated incessantly.

Peng!

Suddenly, a few large holes appeared from the ground. Yellow brown mud spikes emerged from it. In that instant, it pierced through that acolyte's grey robes and inner armour, rupturing a huge hole in the stomach area.

With a look of anguish and disbelief, the acolyte's eyes were drained of life gradually with the blood and innards flowing out from his body.

A dozen minutes later, the grasses in the surrounding shook. Leylin took off his green costume and walked towards the corpse of the acolyte.

He crouched down and retrieved a red badge from the acolyte's chest.

“It's only a Level 2 Acolyte! Value is 3 contribution points!”

Leylin kept the red badge in his robes. The various academies had different badges. Abyssal Bone Forest Academy's was black throughout in colour, while the ones from Sage Gotham's Hut were red. Naturally, the badge from Whitewoods Castle was white. Moreover, there were different shapes for the different levels of acolytes.

“A.I. Chip! Bring forth my stats!”

[Beep! Leylin Farlier, Level 3 Acolyte, Knight. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 3.3, Vitality: 3.7, Spiritual Force: 8(13.2), Magical Power: 8(13) - (Magical Power is in synchronisation with Spiritual Force). Status: Healthy]

“A Shapeshifting spell and Ground Spear has already consumed 5 points of my Magic Power and Spiritual Force. I have to conserve my Spiritual Force and try to use potions to battle!”

Leylin’s eyes flashed.

This bloodbath between academies was not a competition or anything of that sort. According to the latest information received earlier, Leylin could already confirm that the opposing academies had chosen a few gathering points. It was for their acolytes to hurry to the area and then launch a joint attack on Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

As for the acolytes in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, their strength was greatly diminished. They could not agree on gathering points, if not they might be eradicated in one fell swoop. They could only scatter and fight their enemies.

Leylin could already foresee that on the very first day, the Level 3 Acolyte in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy would be able to kill just a few acolytes of the enemy, and obtain a clear advantage. Once the enemies have gathered together, however, they would begin to hunt the acolytes from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy similar to

chasing after wild ducks.

Once he thought of the scenario where the magic spell formation set by the acolytes - when completed - could cover a large area and hone in on the acolytes, Leylin's scalp tingled.

"I could only rely on now to obtain more contribution points! If not as the time passes the difficulty will increase!"

Leylin's expression turned gloomy.

Chapter 90: Laying Traps

The bloodbath situation was forced on Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, which meant that the acolytes of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy were in a disadvantageous situation.

And the acolytes belonging to the two enemy camps would certainly chase them as if they were hunting and killing their prey.

“Anyway, even if it was an astute hunter, if he left behind a single prey, then it is possible for the situation to be reversed - where the hunter becomes the hunted!”

Leylin licked his chapped lips, exposing a malevolent grin.

Now, the three academies' acolytes were scattered within the secret plane and the two enemy groups' acolytes had also not gathered. This was certainly a fortunate timing for Leylin to gather sufficient contribution points!

Once the enemy group gathered, then Leylin would not have any more chances.

“Let's do this! Today, I must defeat and kill as many of the enemy's acolytes as possible and scrape together enough of contribution points. After that, depending on AI Chip's guidance, I will stand aside and avoid the majority of the enemy...”

After deciding on his strategy, Leylin hurriedly looted the Magic

Crystals and resources on the acolyte's body, leaving the scene.

Two hours later after Leylin left, another acolyte came to the scene.

"It's Greg!" After seeing the corpse on the floor, the acolyte's pupils shrank.

He came from the same academy as Greg. Seeing his comrade lying on the ground, this acolyte's expression turned pale white, as if wanting to puke.

He muttered, "Too dangerous! This mission is too dangerous. Greg and I are only Level 2 Acolyte, we have come to this secret plane purely to die! If I knew earlier, I wouldn't have taken up this mission!"

Regrets filled the face of this acolyte.

"Looking at this wound, it should be a heavy physical attack with an Earth element spell. The caster should be a Level 3 Acolyte! To deal with a Level 2 Acolyte, he actually used such a despicable method. What a low-life...."

It was not scary if the enemy was strong, but what was scary is if the enemy was strong and shameless!

After understanding this reasoning the acolyte felt his scalp tingle. He felt as if a pair of bloodthirsty and greedy eyes was

eyeing him from the shrubbery, locking down on its prey.

“No way, I have to leave now!”

He then bowed towards the corpse on the floor, “I’m sorry. Although we used to be good friends, I am unable to give you a proper burial.... Or it may be that the destiny of magicians was to die along the path to the pursuit of truth!”

The acolyte made a prayer for his friend and prepared to leave.

“Je je! What a cold-blooded person, not even caring about his comrade’s corpse!”

A female voice sounded from the air above.

“Who. . . who is that?” The acolyte jumped back several metres like a rabbit, and in his hands, there was a black scroll tightly gripped.

“Haha! Look at him, like a pathetic bunny that has nowhere to escape in front of a predator!”

The girl’s voice sounded again. The crown of a nearby treetop shuddered, and a grey robed girl appeared in front of the acolyte.

This female acolyte wore the uniform of Whitewoods Castle, and the acolyte who was prepared to fight for his life heaved a sigh of

relief.

“Hng! Trash!”

Another male voice appeared from the surrounding, and a young man walked out from the shadows. He wore the insignia from Sage Gotham’s Hut, and his right hand was silver in colour throughout. It radiated a mellow yet suave colour and reflected the shadows of the nearby shrubbery.

“This appearance?”

The acolyte’s hand trembled, and the scroll dropped on the ground. “Silver-Claw Saurun! You are Silver-Claw Saurun!”

Silver-Claw Saurun was considered one of the most vicious existence in the circle of Sage Gotham’s Hut’s acolytes. Rumours have it that for a piece of ingredient needed for an experiment, he had massacred a whole village of regular humans !

Although this was only a rumour, but this acolyte did witness the way Saurun treated his enemies - That was a devilish existence!

Although Sage Gotham’s Hut was a Light Magi faction, but there were bound to be some talented acolyte with outstanding abilities in battle. Evidently, this Saurun was one of them.

Saurun did not bother about his junior who was frightened off his wits, and immediately walked to the corpse to inspect it.

“A very shrewd and ruthless method! Looking at the distance, the enemy should have activated the spell 20 metres away. This distance is the limit of Ground Spear! The enemy possesses an extremely high talent in his ability to use and calculate his Rank o spells from it.”

Saurun licked his silver right hand, giving off a sinister grin.

“He is mine! I will hunt and kill him personally, and let the world know the consequences of incurring the wrath of Sage Gotham’s Hut!”

“As for you!” Saurun looked at the trembling junior distastefully.

“Scram!”

“Yes! Yes, sir!” The acolyte nodded his head and hurriedly scampered away like a frightened little deer. In the blink of an eye, he traversed over several hundred metres, and even used a hastening spell on his body.

Seeing the figure of the leaving acolyte, the girl smirked, “What a useless trash! If not for the agreement between our academies, I would have killed him long ago!”

“Compared to him, I have a high interest in this acolyte from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!”

Saurun licked his lips, and the crimson red tongue seemed to be like that of a snake's, twisting and writhing. "I am already anxious to know how the fresh blood of that acolyte tastes like!"

.....

"A.I. Chip! Maximise the detection area!"

Leylin gives his command as he followed and ran along a white cobblestone path.

In the secret plane, the A.I. Chip's ability was also affected. Although the detection area has become smaller, it was still extremely handy for warning and scouting the way ahead.

A light blue 3D image appeared in front of Leylin's eyes.

In the map, the white cobblestone path seemed to be paved in the shape of a rune, winding its way through a circular garden in the middle of it.

Moreover, the A.I. Chip caught traces of mild radiation on the ground here. This means that the magicians who had used this place before had operated it well, and even the soil had gotten affected.

However, there was obviously nothing of value. It was evident that before this secret plane was activated; all the resources had already been ferreted out.

“It seems like it is rather difficult to get lucky by stumbling over some magician’s inheritance!”

Leylin shrugged his shoulders and continued walking.

[Beep! Human creatures ahead, determined as acolytes. Numbers: 3!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he secretly tailed them.

This trio was formed by 2 male and 1 female acolyte. The male acolyte in the centre had obviously reached the cultivation of a Level 3 Acolyte.

At this moment, this small group was heading towards the garden.

“Do we really have to take such a risk?” The male acolyte who was behind began to grumble. “We had better still gather with the other acolytes! As long as we activate that spell formation, then there is nothing to be fearful of....”

“Shut up!” The male acolyte in the middle did not turn his head, “If you go together with the main body, how much contribution points can you get? I have made enquiries about this place before. This was a deserted secret plane of magicians before! Secret plane! If we are able to dig up any remnants, then our lives in future

would be without a worry. Also, we might even be able to advance into official Magi!”

After saying the last line, the acolyte in the middle show signs of longing and jealousy.

“If you are unwilling to, then you can very well return! Look at Marie, she hasn’t said a word!”

“Alright! Alright!”

The acolyte behind stopped talking, seemingly agreeing with the logic of the acolyte in the middle.

Afterall, he and Marie were Level 2 Acolytes. Their standing was below that of the Level 3 Acolyte in the middle.

“That’s right, we also need to....” The acolyte in the middle suddenly pointed ahead without finishing his sentence, “Look quickly! What’s that?”

On a patch of empty ground in front of them, a grey robed Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolyte was looking back at them with frightened eyes. In his eyes, there was even a purple flower with spikes. From the centre of the flower, there were several strands of feelers which extended to the ground.

Seeing the group of three come over, this Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolyte was obviously frightened as he ran away quickly.

“An Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolyte! A Level 1 Acolyte at that! He’s carrying a... Wolf Whisker Flower?”

The acolyte’s mouth in the middle gaped open and it seemed like several eggs could be stuffed in it.

“Kill it! The Wolf Whisker Flower’s is a valuable ingredient worth close to 1000 Magic Crystals!”

The Level 3 Acolyte roared and gave chase directly.

Xiu Xiu! The Level 2 Acolyte behind him was even quicker. A gust of green whirlwind appeared around his body, increasing his speed by multiple folds as he rushed towards the direction of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolyte.

“Argh! Damn it! Did I not say not to use it until the most critical moment?”

The Level 3 Acolyte slapped his forehead, and then he hugged Marie with an arm, “Hold tight, I’m increasing my speed!”

“Put down the Wolf Whisker Flower!” The Level 2 Acolyte spared no effort in chasing and shouting until his throat turned hoarse from the excitement.

“This is only a Level 1 Acolyte. I will definitely be able to kill him.

The Wolf Whisker Flower!”

At this moment, a seed of insatiable greed and longing sprouted in the young acolyte’s heart.

“What do you want to do?”

Just when the young acolyte’s thoughts went astray, the leader brought Marie and caught up to him.

“No! Nothing!” Seeing the cold gaze in the leader’s eyes, the young acolyte seemed to have his face splashed by cold water. All the desires disappeared in a flash.

“Don’t let him hide inside the shrubberies!” The Level 3 Acolyte commanded.

“Alright!”

The young acolyte steadied his heart and chased the acolyte in front of them.

100 metres!

50 metres!

30 metres!

20 metres!

10 metres!

The distance between both parties got smaller, until the point where the young acolyte could see his enemy's frightened face.

“Wolf Whisker Flower! The Wolf Whisker Flower is ours now! Even if we divide it by 3, there are at least several hundreds of them!”

The young acolyte held a fervent gaze, and looking at the escaping acolyte in front of him, in the same way as he would to innumerable Magic Crystals.

Just as the trio caught up with the escaping acolyte, an explosion occurred.

Boom!!!

Chapter 91: Discovering Jayden

A violent explosion sounded, and the bright yellow tongue of the flames spread in all directions, burning the nearby ground to scorch dark.

At the middle of the explosion, at this moment, there was a pit which was 1 metre deep and several metres wide.

Dust and mud flew up, and the surrounding earth had black smears of blood, broken limbs and internal organs were strewn across which had lost most of its original appearance. After costing Leylin some effort, he finally managed to rummage through them and picked up a few badges.

“A Level 3 Acolyte and two Level 2 Acolyte! A pretty good reward! Using an explosive potion as a triggering trap is indeed useful!”

Leylin was rather satisfied with his battle results. This was one of his few plans - using the Shapeshifting spell to pass off as a Level 1 Acolyte, baiting and luring enemy acolytes into a trap.

With the detection of the A.I. Chip, several times Leylin's 'hunt' was flawless, and did not suffer from any interference.

“Almost there!” Leylin kept the badges well.

He had to collect enough badges before the enemy united as a whole, and then hide until the battle was over.

For this goal, after Leylin used the Shapeshifting spell and Ground Spear once to kill an acolyte, he began to avoid using his own Spiritual Force and Magic Power. Instead, he relied on potions and scrolls to battle, preserving his condition to the fullest in times of need.

After cleaning up the area slightly, Leylin hurriedly left the place.

Not long later, a male and female acolyte appeared in the vicinity.

Looking at the obvious traces of an explosion, and the bits and remains of the Whitewoods Castle uniform, this time, the female acolyte's face darkened.

“I want to kill him! Then hang his head on my horse carriage for 100 days!”

The female acolyte clenched her teeth.

“You will have this chance very soon! We are getting closer and closer to this conniving acolyte....”

Silver-Clawed Saurun half knelt on the ground, and picked up a stalk of grass with sludge on it, before placing it into his mouth.

“However, I admire his courage. He actually dares to obstruct our

acolytes!”

“Enough of the nonsense! Have you found him?”

The female acolyte asked.

“Over there!” Saurun chewed on the blade of grass and closed his eyes for a moment. He then pointed to a direction and the both of them immediately headed in that direction.

In a dense forest, on a withered tree with three branches sat a grey robed figure. His stature was rather short, as he looked up at the sky.

“Dusk is coming!” Leylin muttered.

In the secret plane, there was neither the sun nor the moon, and not even any stars. However, the peculiar thing was that the bright sky would be strewn with white rays of light. At night, these rays of light would disappear, which distinguished between morning and night.

It seems like there was a layer of a barrier which blocked the sun and moon at the same time.

“After a whole day, I have only received these much!”

Leylin counted the contribution points he had gotten.

In his hands rested 6 badges. Amongst these, 5 of them were from Level 2 Acolytes, and 1 from a Level 3 Acolyte, which was the contribution of the trio's leader from before.

It was extremely easy to distinguish between a Level 2 Acolyte and Level 3 Acolyte due the shape.

“According to the academy rules, an enemy Level 2 Acolyte is worth 3 contribution points while a Level 3 Acolyte is worth 10 contribution points. Those famous acolytes are separately categorised. Right now, I have at most 25 contribution points, just half of what I need to exchange for the Grine Water.”

Leylin's face was rather solemn.

Although Leylin had gotten 25 contribution points in a day, it was because that the enemy acolytes were scattered across the secret plane and have not yet gathered.

After a day and night, the acolytes in the other two factions would have definitely gathered. After forming a large army they would surround the acolytes of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

Under those circumstances, Leylin could barely protect his life, let alone obtain more badges from them.

Under the ordeal from the war previously, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy's casualty was extremely disastrous. They simply did not

have time to nurture a new batch of elite forces to go against the opposing two factions.

Moreover, if one walks the dark path often they will meet a ghost someday. Leylin did not believe that his simple trap could always work.

[TL Note: Refers to people who, when they do bad things often, will definitely have a bad ending]

“If it really isn’t plausible, I might have to give up!”

Leylin’s expression was determined. He was not someone to throw away his life for a little benefit.

Even if his will was to become the king in the Magus World, which was with the prerequisite of preserving his life. If not, even if he had everything but lost his life, what was the purpose of it?

“A.I. Chip! Maintain detection area! Report immediately if there are any problems!”

After issuing the A.I. Chip the role of a sentry, he dug a hole in the ground behind the tree for disguise purposes, before sleeping inside the hollow of the tree.

The acolytes of the 3 academies had to stay inside the secret plane for 3 days and 2 nights. Although the physical weariness can be overcome by various potions and methods, the mental fortitude

was not that simple to replenish.

Thankfully, Leylin had the A.I. Chip, and could let it act as a sentry. It would do a great job with its ability.

Darkness blanketed the trees, time to time there were the cries of little worms.

In the hollow of the tree, Leylin shut his eyes. First, he meditated, before falling into deep slumber.

This was not a silent night. In the secret plane, various battles unfolded. Many colourful and enrapturing Rank 0 spells were cast by the acolytes. Ambushes, reverse traps, beauty traps and the shrewd plotting were endless. Many young acolytes left their lives in this secret plane.

Of course, all these had nothing to do with Leylin.

The second day, when the sky was filled with radiant light, the hollow of a tree shook, and a huge hole appeared. Within it, Leylin walked out.

The power of nature was immense. After a night, many traces of blood diminished, and the various plants and animal tracks covered a huge amount of the intense battle marks left on the ground.

Leylin casually stretched and looked at the hollow of the large

tree.

Leylin remembered clearly that he only made this opening last night. However, it was gradually mending back into whole. Leylin even discovered a few green coloured sprouts nearby the opening.

“It seems like the flora and fauna in this magical plane has vitality much higher than the physical world!”

Leylin stroked his chin and stretched his hand to pick a budding sprout with morning dew on it. “A.I. Chip! Scan the composition and record!”

[Beep! Comparing to the plant database. An abnormality is found!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. In front of Leylin was a green and light blue image overlapping. Moreover, in the centre of the image, was a red area that seemed like an octopus which was spreading its tentacles.

“Record composition!” Leylin ordered.

“Who knows if there’ll be a use in future?” Leylin comforted himself, and then began to pick a few more plants and herbs for recording purposes.

[Warning! Warning! There is an extremely strong radiation coming from 523m in the Southeast. Primarily determined as

acolytes using Rank 0 spells!]

Just when Leylin was picking out a green leaf with red veins, the alert from the A.I. Chip sounded.

“A chance!” Leylin’s eyes flashed.

Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle were allies. Their acolytes wouldn’t fight with the other, so if there was any battle, it definitely involved Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes!

“With the A.I. Chip detection, I’m not afraid of being cornered if I am more cautious!”

Leylin patted his chest. Under the grey robes inner layer, a solid pendant lay against his chest.

“Or maybe, it’s time to test the might of the Fallen Star Pendant!”

Leylin whipped his grey robes up and concealed himself as he headed towards where the battle was.

Boom!

As he got closer, Leylin could feel the intensity of the radiation from the spells. This degree could only be produced by a Level 3 Acolyte. Moreover, it belonged to one of the stronger acolytes.

Towards the enemy Level 3 Acolyte which had a chance of advancing into a Magus before 20, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy opened a sky-high reward for it. They bumped the value up from 20 to 100 contribution points.

This is to say, if Leylin managed to pull this feat off, not only could he exchange it for Grine Water, he might even be able to exchange for a Rank 1 defensive spell model.

However, Leylin's legs halted, having a strong desire suddenly to leave.

To him, one Grine Water was enough for him to use in his experiments. The rest were just unnecessary, and it was not worth it to fight against these Level 3 Acolytes.

Moreover, there was another concern on his mind

Although the bounties of those popular Level 3 Acolyte were high, there were always professors behind them. Moreover, their respective professors would have definitely spent countless efforts on them.

Even if Leylin used his toe to think, he could definitely ascertain that the Magi have laid spells on their apprentices. The moment he kills one of them, his appearance and other information would be known by the Magus.

In front of an official Magus, the Shapeshifting spell was

obsolete!

Even if Chairmen Siley protected Leylin after the bloodbath, he did not want to be drawing all the unwanted attentions to him and even be marked by an official Magus.

All in all, the risk was too great, yet the benefit was too little. Leylin would rather look for some Level 2 Acolyte or weary Level 3 Acolyte to kill than to invoke the wrath of those geniuses.

He did not hesitate to turn around.

Suddenly, a male voice sounded, “Haha! Jayden! You have finally landed in my hands!”

“Jayden?!” Leylin’s footsteps halted, and turned back.

The location of the battle was in the middle of some trees. And the trees right now have already been destroyed, showing a large clearing.

Leylin stealthily hid to watch the battle.

In the centre of the clearing, Jayden who wore a hunter’s attire was half kneeling on the ground. There were even vines coiling around him, acting as armour.

In front of him, a black-robed, male figure let out a maniacal

laughter.

Chapter 92: Striking

The black-haired acolyte had a silver chain coiled around his waist, and from time to time there were blue lightning sparks igniting between his hands, making a crackling noise.

“Haha... Jayden, I mentioned it before. One day you will land in my hands!”

The black-haired acolyte laughed wildly. With the wave of his hand, a blue streak of lightning faster than supersonic directly landed on Jayden’s armour of vines.

Sssii!

Jayden was sent flying, as if a train had knocked into him, and crashed onto the ground forming a large hole.

“How is it? Where is the arrogance back then when you stole my piece of lightning core?”

The black-haired acolyte taunted, before casting another spell at Jayden. It opened a gap on Jayden’s body.

The green vines had a huge opening now, revealing Jayden’s skin. A large patch of his skin was charred, and Leylin could faintly catch a whiff of barbeque smell.

“Don’t think a broken Magic Artifact can save you!”

It seemed like the hatred the black-haired acolyte had for Jayden was not small, as his glee in seeking revenge was shown on his face.

“A.I. Chip! Inspect Jayden!”

Leylin did not dare to scan the black-haired acolyte and chose the severely injured Jayden as his target.

[Beep! Jayden. Strength: 1.9, Agility: 2.7, Vitality: 2.1 (3.5), Spiritual Force: 3 (10.8). Status: Mild injury. Paralysis!]

No matter how much the opponent taunted him, Jayden did not speak a single word. He only used an icy gaze to stare at his enemy.

“Not good! Jayden is also a Level 3 Acolyte now with a Magic Artifact, but he actually could not beat the opponent!”

Leylin’s thoughts quickly surmised.

Leylin was attracted by Jayden’s name to this place out of curiosity but did not intend to risk his life for him.

To tell the truth, if Jayden’s enemy was not strong, Leylin would have struck as Jayden had disclosed information to him previously. But now the enemy’s strength seemed to be extremely

strong, and Leylin was somewhat hesitant.

“A.I. Chip! Inspect the target’s data and calculate the winning rate in a battle!”

Leylin ordered.

[Beep! Mission establishing, beginning fight simulation....]

The A.I. Chip calculated rapidly and came to a conclusion. [Host’s winning rate is 77%. Possible scenario: Death of the target, light damage to the host!]

“This probability is rather low!” Leylin’s brows furrowed.

“Look! There are really people there!”

Just as Leylin was hesitant, the voice of a female travelled over. It was extremely familiar, and Leylin even heard the alluring pants of its owner not too long ago.

On the other side of the battlefield, Bicky and another female acolyte came over.

“It’s Bicky! Why would she come here?”

Leylin inhaled deeply. He suddenly felt that things were going to

be extremely troublesome.

“There is someone fighting. Ah! Senior Jayden!”

The female acolyte with Bicky recognised Jayden, and she seemed to have some affection for him. Once she saw him injured, she hurried over.

“A girl? Your friend?”

The black-haired acolyte’s brows furrowed and suddenly clapped. “You brought me shame by stealing my possession. Today I will return it in multiple folds to you. For instance, claiming this woman right before your eyes....”

The black-haired acolyte sniggered lecherously, and his hands moved and fluttered like a butterfly.

Sssii!

The blue lightning of snake continuously formed on his hands and transformed into a metal chain. It pierced the fireball casted hurriedly by the female acolyte, and knocked her to the ground.

“Molly!” Bicky was frightened, and she hurried over too.

“This idiot!”

Leylin helplessly shook his hand as he got up.

He still harboured some feelings for Bicky, and would take a risk for her under the circumstances that his life was not threatened.

Of course, his largest assurance was the winning rate that the A.I. Chip provided him!

If the A.I. Chip's calculation did not give him such a winning rate, he might have chosen to leave. After advancing into a Rank 1 Magus he would then return and seek revenge for Bicky.

Furthermore, Leylin was completely unwilling to help if he had to pay the price of being critically injured or even death to win.

On the other hand, if it were only some mild injuries, Leylin felt that Bicky deserved his help.

“Actually, deep down I am an extremely rational, not to mention unfeeling and apathetic person!”

Leylin scoffed at himself and hurriedly moved, closing the distance of a dozen metres and held onto Bicky.

“Don't go over!”

“Who... Are you?” Bicky gave a puzzled stare to the guy in front of her.

Leylin's Shapeshifting spell was still in effect and even his voice was altered through potions. Therefore, Bicky did not recognise Leylin at all.

"A person who has come to save you!" Leylin's voice was hoarse, and directly locked gazes with the black-haired acolyte.

"An interesting insect. It was you who was hiding in the corner earlier, huh?"

The black-haired acolyte clenched his fist, as blue lightning coiled around it, emitting sparks every now and then.

A few bolts of electricity were shot into the ground, and each exploded, creating many small holes. The shattered stones and mud flew up beside Leylin, and were blocked by his acolyte's robes and soon fell back to the ground.

"An electric element acolyte and it also seems like his affinity towards it is rather high!"

Leylin gradually withdrew the cross blade hung on his waist, "This will be a tough battle that I never had before!"

To prevent Bicky from recognising him, he could not use some common methods used by Potion Masters. He could only use those that he learnt when he left the academy.

“However, this is also the best chance to test my abilities! Back then in Extreme Night City, Murphy and the rest were all people who had retired, and their battle abilities were rubbish! As for the acolytes in the market, I could not strike, if not I would have become their sworn enemy!”

And this acolyte in front of him was obviously strong in his academy.

Leylin licked his lips and suddenly felt a strong battle desire surging from his chest and spreading to his four limbs. He could even hear the blood which was rapidly coursing, and made his eyes a little bloodshot.

This was a man’s hot bloodedness and desire for battle!

“Haha... Look what I found? Merely a Level 1 Acolyte who dares to draw a sword against me?”

The black-haired acolyte sneered and his expression became colder and more resolute, “Kiddo! I will give you one last chance. Hurry and kneel to the revered Lord Torash and admit your wrongdoing, and beg for my magnanimity! On account of my good mood, I may even pardon your sins....”

Shing!

In an instant, a silver arc of light flashed. It crossed the distance of a dozen metres and struck at the black haired Torash.

The silver arc of light materialised into a cross blade which brought on a heavy killing intent. The aura emitted from it even pressed down on the grasses.

The black-haired Torash had a startled expression. Suddenly, several green runes formed by lightning appeared underneath his leather shoes and crept to his thighs.

As if under some stimulation, Torash jumped backed several metres and avoided the attack.

Bang! The cross blade landed and slashed a cross shape hole on the ground.

The grey shadow flashed, and Leylin appeared at the original position of the black-haired acolyte. He gripped the cross blade in his hands and put on a regretful expression.

With some lingering fear, Torash touched his face and felt a gash, which was several centimetres deep, on it.

Although Leylin's attack earlier did not strike the opponent directly, the force it brought already caused a gash on his face.

“So fast! If not for the hastening lightning rune my professor gave me, I might have been a corpse already!”

Very soon the fear subsided from Torash's face and it turned into a contorted expression of rage.

“You... You actually dare to harm the mighty Lord Torash, I'm going to kill you!”

However, his rage did not muddle his mind. Although Torash's expression showed that he couldn't wait to kill Leylin, he retrieved a scroll from his waist sack.

“I admit that your speed is extremely fast. You should, at least, have the physical ability of a Knight, right? But so what? Although a Knight's body is stronger than a regular human and is not afraid of steel swords and large axes, it is just meaningless under a magician's spell!”

Sssii! Torash pulled the scroll open, and an icy cold spell was activated, covering the whole of the battlefield.

Countless white mist condensed in the air, turning into ice and spread across the land.

The surrounding temperature decreased by dozens of degrees. Bicky pulled the friend on the ground to the back of Leylin. Her body shivered as she looked at Leylin's back, obviously grateful and puzzled at the same time.

Although she had no memory of this person, Bicky had a strong feeling that she knew this strong person who had suddenly

appeared in front of her.

“Who exactly, are you?” Bicky looked at Leylin’s figure, her expression complicated.

At this moment, Torash’s scroll had finished its activation. With him at the heart of it, the domain of several hundred metres was covered by frost. There were even a layer of snow and ice on the trees and plants as if it was the coldest period of winter.

[Beep! Host is affected by frost. Speed is estimated to decrease by 43%] The unfeeling A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“No matter how fast a Knight is, as long as his speed is rendered useless, then it would just be a sitting duck, waiting on a dining table to be feasted on!”

Looking at Leylin’s figure whose hair and brows have already been frozen in ice, Torash smirked. “I can slightly alter this spell. The frost on you is definitely more at a lower temperature than the two girls. How is it?”

“A pity!”

Leylin felt rather regretful in his heart. Looking at the spell formation of this acolyte’s shoes and the scroll, he knew that Torash had a high attainment in spell formation. If not, it would mean that his professor was an expert in this area, to be able to customise this spell for Torash.

Leylin really wanted to sit down and discuss alchemy and runes with him, but alas, he was just being delusional.

Chapter 93: Activation

Leylin clenched his fist tightly — the hand grasping the sword hilt was clearly somewhat stiff.

His face appeared pale and petrified as if he had gotten frostbite.

One must know that Leylin had a Vitality of 3.7. If it was any regular human, they would have long since frozen to death!

“I don’t have any intention to go against you. As long as you let go of those two girls, I will leave immediately!”

Leylin used the cross blade and pointed at Bicky’s direction, in return for her grateful gaze.

“No! Get him to release senior Jayden, if not I’m not leaving!”

The girl beside Bicky, who was saved, still maintained her resolve.

Leylin rolled his eyes, if not for Bicky; did she really think that he would appear in the name of justice? Moreover, looking at the situation again, Jayden had apparently deeply offended the other party previously, so why would he let go of Jayden so easily?

As expected, after listening to the female acolyte, Torash’s gaze turned frostier, and immediately he waved his hand. A thick and

long lightning streaked across the sky, directly landing onto Jayden.

Bang! The vines on Jayden's body fell and he fainted. Moreover, his whole body turned into a black colour, as if like a pile of scorched rubble.

“My apologies, I don't wish to let anyone present go today!”

Torash waved his hands.

According to the A.I. Chip's detection, although Jayden's outer appearance seemed to be terrifying, there was still a life force pulsating in him. Therefore, Leylin did not bother anymore about him. Instead, Leylin was more cautious about this acolyte in front of him.

“A Lightning element is indeed one of the stronger powers. Although Jayden's Magic Artifact belongs to an attack type with minimal defense, he was still defeated so quickly! No, it could be that the other party had been toying with him the same way a cat would with a mouse!”

“Now, it is my turn!”

Torash, who was on the other side charged directly at him and brandished a short black staff in his hand.

“Hng! Trying to be mystifying!” Leylin snorted and used the

cross blade to slash at him.

Peng! The two weapons clashed. Under the frost effect, Leylin speed unavoidably took a slower turn. The original mirage effect could now not be used by him, where Torash caught dozens of his sword slashes.

Leylin's Strength was obviously higher than his opponent, and his cross blade was of superior quality to his opponent's short metal staff.

After the two weapons clanged, Leylin used the force in both his arms and pressed the sword down on his opponent.

“Hehe... Your Strength isn't too bad!”

Although the blade was just centimetres away from his face, there was no fear on Torash face. Looking at Leylin, his gaze held some ridicule and... the savage thrill of retaliation?

Leylin felt something was amiss, and hurriedly let go of the cross blade as he jumped away.

In that very moment when he released his hands, several bolts of lightning extended from Torash's arms and shot at the cross blade, even up to Leylin's hands!

In the moment when the lightning current was about to hit him, Leylin forwent his sword and evaded the attack.

“Too late! Torash looked at Leylin’s figure and chanted an incantation.

The current from the staff directly bore through the mud and extended like the root of a tree. In the blink of an eye, it caught up to Leylin.

* Zzzii! “Once the black lightning landed on the ground, it reappeared from the ground right in front of Leylin.

As if a poisonous snake, the blue lightning charged at Leylin.

“Ah!” Bicky who was on the other side involuntarily screamed and she clasped her mouth.

* Ping! * Suddenly, a layer of silver membrane appeared on Leylin’s body.

This layer of membrane immediately draped over Leylin’s whole body covering every inch, even his orifices were not left out.

On the silvery membrane, there were several pale reflections of flickering red jewels, giving off a mystical lustre.

The blue lightning took on the shape of a python with a crazed leer and opened its jaws. Lightning-made razor-sharp teeth directly bit on the membrane.

* Sssii Sssii! *

A similar sound to metal smashing porcelain was heard, and the ear piercing noise travelled across the whole battlefield. Bicky involuntarily covered her ears, to let her nerves calm down.

The lightning on Leylin's body exploded, and from time to time a few poisonous-snake-like lightning currents converged and let off an explosive noise.

Looking on, Leylin seemed to be a silver statue, who was receiving the blessings of lightning bolts.

The lightning attack lasted for close to thirty seconds before it dissipated.

There was a shocked expression on Leylin's face as he looked at the indication given by the A.I. Chip.

[... Host is subjected to Lightning-based attacks. Degree of power: 9! Fallen Star Pendant has automatically activated, energy consumed: 23.99%. Host has successfully blocked the attack and sustains no injuries!]

“Too careless!” The opponent's lightning could actually pass through normal physical materials. Moreover, it could use the layer of frost on the ground as a conductor to initiate the attacks!

Leylin looked at his hands. Knowing that his opponent excelled in the Lightning element, Leylin had already put on leather gloves before the battle.

However, the hands that gripped the cross blade earlier were still rather numb.

There was also a precursive condition for the Fallen Star Pendant to be activated. Leylin had customised it to activate only when his life was in peril. Otherwise, any raindrop from the sky would activate the Fallen Star Pendant and finish the consumption of energy in the Magic Artifact.

Previously, because Leylin had let go of his sword early on, the damage from the electric current to his body was extremely little. It was not enough to achieve the criteria to activate the Fallen Star Pendant.

Of course, due to the conductivity, the lightning was too fast, and Leylin still received an attack from it in his hands.

At last, Leylin backed away and under his opponent's chase, he suffered a 9 degree lightning attack. If he did not defend further, his life would be in peril. Hence, the criterion for the activation of Fallen Star Pendant was achieved, where a layer of membrane immediately appeared from his body.

The Fallen Star Pendant's defense could negate attacks up to 15 degrees. This is to say, if Torash attack could not exceed this degree, Leylin's body was like a turtle shell until the energy of the

Fallen Star Pendant was depleted.

“How is this possible?” Gazing at Leylin who seemed injured, Torash’s mouth was opened widely, enough to fit several duck eggs in it.

“This is an attack my professor has personalised for me. It complements with my affinity and my degree of attack is at least 9! How could you be fine?”

“I understand now! You definitely must have a defensive Magic Artifact on your body!” Black-haired Torash pondered and quickly understood the truth.

“Although it is only a low-grade defence Magic Artifact, there will definitely be many official Magi who will be interested in it....”

Torash licked his lips and a fervent greed appeared on his face.

For this bloodbath, both sides signed an agreement not to use any strength that was above an acolyte!

Any person, scroll of Magic Artifact which exceeded this criterion would be teleported out in a flash and had no chance of getting in the secret plane.

Although Leylin’s Magic Artifact was precious, it still belonged to the low-grade series.

In Leylin's eyes, these low-grade Magic Artifacts had might below that of official Magi.

Any Rank 1 spell's degree of attack was 20 and above. If Leylin used the Fallen Star Pendant to block against them, he would definitely be slain immediately, not leaving a trace behind.

However, amongst the acolytes, the Fallen Star Pendant was a divine item!

Furthermore, even an official Magus would not mind having an extra layer of defense, no matter how small it was. However, the defence from Fallen Star Pendant was activated from the pendant and did not affect the owner in one bit.

The value of a low-grade defence Magic Artifact was at least 5 times that of Jayden's attack type Magic Artifact!

Which is to say, right now, besides the A.I. Chip, the most valuable thing that Leylin had was this Magic Artifact!

“Kill him! Kill him! Then that Magic Artifact is mine!”

Torash's eyes turned bloodshot, “Even if it is a Magic Artifact, there is a limitation. Once it's depleted of energy, before the next recharge, it would be a piece of trash! However, could I last until that long?”

“Even if I’m unable to keep him here today, I can gather other students to chase after him... Wait a minute, maybe there is a better idea?”

After seeing the Fallen Star Pendant, Torash did not harbour any hopes of holding Leylin here today. However, the flames of desire slowly invaded his logic.

Suddenly, Torash saw Bicky who was behind Leylin and his eyes flashed as he made a proposition.

“You! You are very concerned with the green-haired girl behind right?” Torash questioned, “Don’t deny it; jumping out to save her is the best proof!”

“So what?” Leylin’s brows furrowed.

“Give me your Magic Artifact, and I’ll let her go. Not only that, even Jayden and the other girl, I’ll let them go too!” Torash licked his lips.

“Haha....” After hearing that unexpected speech, Leylin shook his head.

“Yes! I can’t keep you here today as you have the Magic Artifact. However, I can definitely retain the green haired girl, and even kill her....”

Torash changed his words to a threat.

“Please do!” Leylin stretched his hands and gestured.

“You... Why would you....” This reply made Torash extremely shock.

“I only have some involvement with her, which is why I wanted to rescue her. If the loss is too great, however, then it wouldn’t be worth it! Furthermore, after I lose this defensive Magic Artifact, how can I still be able to haggle with you?”

Leylin looked at Torash with ridicule in his eyes.

He deeply understood that towards people making threats, you must never show that you are extremely mindful of the thing in their hands. If not, you would be baited into more and more demands.

Even if Torash really killed Bicky today, Leylin would only seek revenge for her another day. Therefore, if he wanted to use Bicky to threaten Leylin, there were only two words for it: dream on!

Chapter 94: Self-Destruct

“I don’t believe you. You must have said it on purpose, didn’t you?”

Torash’s pair of cunning eyes flitted to the back of Leylin.

“Did you see that, after listening to your words, your little girlfriend is extremely heartbroken!”

“How lame!” Leylin did not even turn back.

“However, it’s time to end this!” Leylin looked up the sky, and the light rays were even brighter than dawn.

Magicians were intelligent beings. By threatening Leylin, Torash only harboured a negligible hope. His main purpose was most likely to stall for time until other acolytes could support him.

The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes in the secret plane were at an extreme disadvantage. Now it was also the second day, and the enemy acolytes would have already gathered. Once Leylin was discovered, a scene of calling and shouting for him to be killed would happen.

At that time, the innumerable spells which could cover the sky and earth would rain upon him. Even if Leylin had the Fallen Star Pendant, its energy was limited.

“What end?”

A few ingredients appeared in Torash’s hands, as he stepped several steps backwards.

“Of course, it is to end this silly game!”

Leylin’s eyes flashed and chanted an incantation.

Sssii! A reddish-green gas spread across upon the icy ground.

When the frost and a thin layer of mist came in contact with the red gas, the temperature of the battlefield rose immediately by a few degrees.

As for the green mist, it continued to spread across the field. The visibility lowered immediately, and one could not see beyond a 3 metres radius.

“This is a spell I specially prepared for you, Flaming Cloud of Afterlife!”

Leylin spoke softly. Earlier when he exchanged senseless sentences with the opponent, he was actually wildly using the A.I. Chip for calculations. Furthermore, he set up the field, planting various types of ingredients in it.

“Just a mere corroding gas!”

Torash disdained it. On his whole body, there raged a blue current. If one described the current on his body as just a thin layer before, now it could be said to have already expanded to be 1 centimetre thick.

“Go!” Torash pointed, and the blue current directly charged into the reddish-green mist.

Sssii!

Where the electricity went, the reddish green gas evaporated, revealing the area around it.

However, Torash’s smug face was not maintained for more than a moment before it changed.

“This energy wave! You! You are not some Level 1 Acolyte, but a Level 3 Acolyte!”

From the centre of the reddish-green gas, energy fluctuations could be blatantly felt. His own electric snake was immediately corroded by the green mist. Furthermore, a trace of green colour continuously extended along the trajectory of the lightning towards Torash.

“No!” Torash gave a profound look to Leylin who was in the midst of clouds and mist and then simply broke into a run.

Leylin swung his arms and a green magic ring entirely enveloped Torash and he slowed down as if he was bound by chains.

Sssii!! A red-green smoky cloud spread close to Torash and it wrapped itself around his body.

The smoke grew denser and soon, Leylin could not even see Torash.

Crackle! Under the Flaming Cloud of Afterlife came the sounded of lightning and thunder sounds, along with Torash's cries of anguish.

Leylin smiled coldly. This Cloud of Afterlife had been modified by Leylin, and was specially inserted with the most conducive energy particles for the Lightning element. It could be said that it was the bane of all Lightning element acolytes!

After hearing the wails within the Cloud of Afterlife, and the noises of flesh corroding, a disturbed expression appear on Bicky's face.

“Argh! I’m going to kill you!”

A dozen seconds later, Torash charged out of the Cloud of Afterlife at Leylin, bringing a ball of cloud that clung to his body.

“Ah!” After seeing Torash's appearance, Bicky and the other acolyte let out a terrified scream.

At this moment, Torash was half-naked, with his clothing almost dissolved. On his body were many abscesses which were leaking with thick yellow pus.

One of his eyeballs had fallen out of its socket, held hanging there by a few bloody tissues still attached to it.

Along with a few missing pieces of flesh on his face, right now Torash looked like an imitation of Leylin's corpse from the previous world.

“Although acolytes can use energy particles to strengthen their Vitality, such a strong life force is still extremely rare!”

Leylin stretched his hands, and a black wrist guard automatically extended its reach, finally turning into a black bow where a sharp arrow with a reverse spike was notched on it.

[Wind speed and humidity in calculation, adjusting trajectory!]

Under the aid of the A.I. Chip, right now Leylin's archery skills were that of a bow master.

Chi Xiu Xiu! Four arrows were shot from the bow and like black rays of light, streaked across the sky, directly penetrated through Torash's 4 limbs, nailing him to the ground.

“Urgh Urgh!” Torash struggled. The flesh on his body continuously fell to the ground, and it seemed that even his voice was now affected. Right now, he could not even voice a single word.

“We... Won?” Looking at this scene, Bicky’s eyes looked somewhat bewildered.

“En! It’s us who won, but there are still some things to do!”

Leylin notched his bow again and pointed to the girl beside Bicky, “What’s your name?”

“Mo...Molly! Sir!” Witnessing Leylin using the Cloud of Afterlife to torture Torash in such an unthinkable manner, the female acolyte yielded very quickly.

“Very good! Molly! Go up there and take down the severed head of the enemy who tried to murder your friend!”

“No! You can’t do this! Molly is still a kid! I! I will be able to do it for her....”

Bicky stood up.

Xiu! At the same time, an arrow shot past the fine hair beside her ears, flying to a distance behind.

“Do not countermand my orders. If not, the next arrow will be through your brain!” Leylin’s eye flashed coldly, seemingly fiendish.

“I will go!” That female acolyte called Molly spoke up and Bicky turned silent.

“I like girls who are obedient!” Leylin nodded his head and used an arrow to point at Torash who was thrashing on the ground. “So then! Hurry and do it!”

The female acolyte gritted her teeth. She took out a knife which was embedded in jewels from her robes and walked forward. Looking on at Torash who was pinned to the ground on his four limbs by four arrows, her expression was extremely complicated.

It was this person, who was deemed as a potential Magus, a genius acolyte who possessed a Magic Artifact. However, right now his four limbs were pinned to the ground as if a dog that was waiting to be slaughtered.

This feeling extended like vines, spreading its reach in her heart. “Is this the taste of power? How great!”

Looking at the female acolyte raising her dagger, Leylin moved quickly and grabbed Bicky, retreating dozens of metres behind.

“Let me go, you sick pervert!” Bicky continuously thrashed.

From her aspect, this acolyte that Leylin shapeshifted into was a stranger to her. Yet he had an unthinkable power and he was extremely emotionless.

Earlier he said that he was rescuing her, yet in the blink of an eye he pointed an arrow at her and even fired it!

In Bicky's heart, right now Leylin was now a somewhat powerful madman.

Moreover, in the Magus World, due to problems occurring from experiment and meditations, it was likely possible that their mental state was affected.

Leylin shrugged his shoulders. After maintaining a distance away, he let go of Bicky.

At this moment, both their eyes were shining bright and staring at the female acolyte who was holding a dagger before Torash.

“Too rash! Too rash! The winning rate that the A.I. Chip provided earlier was not considered high. Moreover, it said that I could only kill this acolyte after paying the price of sustaining light injuries. However, right now he is just a piece of flesh on a chopping board! For me to butcher!”

“Unless... There are some unknown trump cards on his body!” Leylin's intelligent eyes gazed.

After holding the dagger, Molly looked in Leylin's direction again. Right now the arrow notched in his bow was still aimed towards her. She could only despair as she closed her eyes and pierced the dagger downwards!

“What a pity!” At this moment, Torash suddenly opened his eyes, revealing death and unresolved regrets in his eyes.

“I never thought that I would really use this move one day, much less to deal with a mere Level 2 Acolyte!”

Boom!

In his voice, countless lightning appeared from Torash's body. These lightning were extremely violent, and spread through Torash's body in an instant, even converging inward.

After the lightning had reached an extremely small dot, Torash's body suddenly exploded, with the noise of the huge boom reverberating throughout the area.

The sound wave continuously swept past everything, uprooting plants and sending pebbles flying.

“Be careful!” In the moment when the explosion occurred, Leylin immediately pulled Bicky to his side and smashed a potion on the ground - Trevor's Revolving Shield Potion!

At the same time, the Fallen Star Pendant on his neck also

emitted a dusky glow.

Under the protection of the potion and the layer of light, the ground under Leylin and Bicky was not touched the slightest. It was even taller than the surrounding area of a certain length.

[Estimated target's degree of power: 16! Spell type - Corpse Combustion: 45.7%, Electric Field: 34.5%]

Looking at the data from the A.I. Chip, Leylin finally understood how did the A.I. Chip come up with the winning rate.

Although he had the Fallen Star Pendant, it could only resist spells which were 15 degrees or lower. As for Torash's final self-destruct explosion, it was obviously at 16 degrees, which could break the defence of the Fallen Star Pendant and cause harm to Leylin.

However, the last hit was done by Molly, while Leylin distanced himself dozens of metres behind. Not only did he suffer little collateral damage from the explosion, there was even time to put up his defenses.

“However, a degree of 16 huh? It is already close to that of a Magus value, he is indeed a top acolyte from a large faction!”

Towards his dead enemies, Leylin never spared his praises for them.

“You murderer! Executioner! You knew long ago that the opponent would self-destruct, didn’t you?”

Bicky who was in Leylin’s embrace pushed him away, her pair of pretty eyes filled with tears.

The ground where Torash self-destructed turned into a large pit now; together with bits and pieces of clothing and charred flesh. In the explosion earlier, Torash and that female acolyte, Molly, naturally had died together. Even the remnants of their corpses were mixed together.

Chapter 95: 1 Versus 2

Hearing Bicky's accusation, Leylin only rubbed his nose, without saying anything.

Meanwhile, he was rejoicing from the bottom of his heart. He was fortunate that he had altered his appearance beforehand, if not, it would have been hard to face Bicky.

However, he could only do this much.

Leylin came and stood next to the large pit formed by the explosion, and a round badge fell near his foot. The originally bright and beautiful badge was now covered with dust and it also had some residual flesh upon it.

“Just from a look, it seems that this acolyte must be a genius in his academy! His badge, at the very least, would be worth 50 contribution points!”

Leylin was still contemplating the badge lying beside his feet, with some hesitation.

Now, this badge was under his foot; if he stooped down, he could then get it into his hand.

With it, Leylin's contribution points would be enough to exchange for one portion of Grine Water when the bloodbath was over.

He heard about the information regarding advancement into an official Magus from the vengeful spirit Roman and was rather hesitant in using such a method to breakthrough. However, the Grine Water was extremely valuable, and even if he did not use it, obtaining it and using the A.I. Chip to research on its composition was also a good idea.

However, the badges of a few extraordinary acolytes from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and the opposing academies have been specially marked. As long as Leylin handed over the badge, it would be equivalent to admitting that he was the murderer of Torash!

Leylin would never forget that there is a professor standing behind Torash!

“Maybe, giving this badge to Jayden or Merlin is a good idea!”

Leylin stepped on the badge below his feet and smiled.

He had had a quick look earlier; Jayden had been knocked out at the border of the battlefield. Although he seemed to be in a miserable state, he managed to preserve his life, and there did not seem to be any life-threatening injuries.

“However, there are still two worms that I have to deal with!”

Leylin looked at the shrubbery at the side and suddenly flung two

fiery red explosive potions at it.

Boom! The two test tubes collided in midair, creating a large flame which seemed to blanket over the shrubbery.

Xiu Xiu! In the moment when the flame engulfed the shrubbery, two black figures flew out from it, landing on an empty patch of ground.

Silver-Claw Saurun and another blonde acolyte looked at the pit where Torash self-destructed, their expressions grim.

“Torash, that lightning wielder, actually died by this fellow’s hands. Oh god, this fellow is a monster!”

Saurun looked at the expressionless Leylin, his heart roaring wildly. Lightning wielder Torash, that was a monster whose reputation was not beneath that of his silver claw! Yet today he actually died by Leylin’s hands, so what kind of strength did Leylin wield?

“If I knew he was that powerful, I wouldn’t be this foolish to chase after him!”

At this moment, the feeling of regret slowly engulfed Saurun’s heart.

“What should be done?” The blonde female acolyte looked at Saurun and cursed him inwardly when she saw that he was already

of a mind to retreat.

“What else? We have to see if the opponent will let us go!”

Saurun waved his hands and bowed slightly to Leylin. “Respected acolyte who hails from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, your strength has convinced me, and I, Saurun, will never hold any ill intents towards you in future....”

Towards Saurun’s gesture of succumbing, the female blond acolyte pursed her lips but never spoke a word.

After seeing Leylin’s might and brutality, even she was somewhat afraid!

As for the revenge of his fellow acolytes? Although the death rate of Whitewoods Castle and Sage Gotham’s Hut was not as high as Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, but there were a few unlucky ones dying each month.

If Saurun and the blonde acolyte were to avenge every dead fellow acolyte, then they would definitely have to first massacre the acolytes within their academy.

The reason for following Leylin before was because they thought of him as a prey, and was prepared to play a good game with him.

But now, Leylin’s ability had far exceeded their expectations, and his actions were extremely meticulous, yet brutal, which made

them rather fearful of him.

“Is that so?”

Leylin did not agree nor deny, and kept the black bow in his hands. He also picked up the cross blade which he had thrown on the ground earlier.

“A pity! You should not have followed me!”

Leylin growled softly, at the same time chanting an incantation, and gave his cross blade a smear with his hand.

Sssii! The temperature suddenly dropped by a few degrees, and the frost continued to spread on the sword. In an instant, Leylin’s cross blade turned into a transparent icy greatsword.

He managed to obtain this set of frost alchemy runes from the corpse of the half beastman previously, who was the close associate of Extreme Night City Lord. After storing it into the A.I. Chip, he also did an analysis on it.

At this moment, under the effect of the frost alchemy runes, the effect of the icy greatsword did not pale in comparison to a low-grade Magic Artifact!

“Light of the fallen!” After brandishing his greatsword in satisfaction, Leylin activated another Magic Artifact on his body.

Peng! A streak of an illusory glow was emitted from the Fallen Star Pendant, which engulfed Leylin's whole body. The silver-grey light slowly transformed into illusory armour, which protected Leylin.

At this moment, Leylin, in his silver armour of light, with a transparent greatsword, looked just like a knight from the fables!

The A.I. Chip's reminder continuously sounded in Leylin's head, [Under the effect of the frost runes, estimated degree of attack with the cross blade is 3 to 5, also carrying the side effect of an ice attack! The entire defense in the Fallen Star Pendant is activated, energy consumed is depleting, estimated to be fully depleted in 15 minutes!]

“We have no choice but to fight!”

Saurun and the other female acolyte looked at each other in the eye and saw the viciousness reflected in their expressions.

From Leylin's performance, it was clear that he was not inclined to let them go, so no matter how they pleaded it would be meaningless.

Moreover, they were also geniuses with their own pride. They may not fare better in a 1-on-1 fight against Torash, but in a 2 against 1 situation, even Torash would have had a headache from fighting them.

“I’ll stall him first; you prepare your formidable spell!”

Saurun said to the female acolyte and immediately reached out with his right hand.

At this moment, the silver skin on his right hand shimmered and transformed into scales. His fingernails extended and curved downwards, the sharpness bringing a cold glint. His whole silvery human palm turned into silvery beast claw!

A bloodthirsty tint emerged in Saurun’s eyes as he stepped forward to shield the female blonde acolyte behind him.

As for the female blonde acolyte, she continuously drew out ingredients from her robes as she chanted, from time to time using a dagger to cut her skin, dripping her fresh blood on the magic ingredients.

A strong magical energy wave gradually formed around the female blonde acolyte.

“How interesting. A close combat with a far cast, this is indeed a good combination!”

Leylin laughed manically and charged forward.

Bang! With the effect of Leylin’s Knight qualities, Saurun only

saw a grey blur and could only instinctively reach out with his razor claw.

Peng! The frost greatsword and the silver claw clashed. An icy, bone-chilling cold permeated to the silver claw, extending onto Saurun's body.

“So fast!” Saurun retreated several steps and hid the silver claw behind his back.

Borrowing the concealment of his sleeves, there was a layer of frost which slowly climbed up his arm, until the point of his elbow.

“Haha.... Great! Again!”

Leylin roared wildly, once again brandishing the greatsword and charged forward. Sensing the faint aura about him, Saurun couldn't help but close his eyes, with a notion of wanting to submit to Leylin.

“Cross Blade Slash!”

Leylin hollered, the frost greatsword drew a beautiful cross. What was different from the previous energy wave was that the Cross Blade Slash now had formed a layer of ice which was sent chopping towards Saurun.

“Argh!” Saurun's eyes were bloodshot as he gritted his teeth and raised the silver claw before his body. The scales on the silvery

claw quickly extended and took on the form of a small shield to block the attack.

Chi! The greatsword made a huge dent in Saurun's silver defense. Not only were there white ice forming, the chilliness also permeated the area.

Pu! Saurun revoked his silver shield, but now, upon his silvery right hand, there were two deep wounds through which bones could be seen and a sheet of cold ice blocked this wound from bleeding.

An icy-cold sensation continuously spread within his body and Saurun was aghast upon having discovered that already his right hand was feeling numb as if it had lost all sensation and that his body movement had also become more and more restricted.

“Die!”

Leylin unhesitatingly brought the sword to Saurun's neck in order to behead him.

“No!” bellowed Saurun, waving the stub of his left hand. His left hand had by now turned silver and the fingertips had a faint blackish tinge and he aimed a stab at Leylin's abdomen.

Within the academy, all the apprentices knew that Saurun's achievements in Transfiguration far exceeded that of other similar disciples and that his right hand could transform and become a

sharp, incomparable killing machine.

However, all of the acolytes were deceived by Saurun. His left hand was the real trump card!

Not only could he use beast transfiguration for his silver-claw attack, it even had a Shadow and Toxic element that Saurun had paid a high price for. As long as the poison were to be smeared onto the opponent's skin, even an official Magus would be in trouble!

On the brink of death, Saurun adopted a fighting method that would result in both parties being severely injured, for the sliver of a chance at survival!

Peng!

Leylin's expression was grim as he allowed the razor sharp claw to scratch his body. At the same time, the frost greatsword swung down mercilessly as it severed Saurun's head from his neck.

Chapter 96: Slaying The Two Acolytes

Peng!

Saurun's head, an unresigned expression upon the face, flew several metres far in the air, and finally fell to the ground. His both eyes were opened wide; he was no longer able to close them.

His headless corpse was still kneeling in front of Leylin and blood poured out from it continuously.

The corpse's left hand was still extended — it was his misfortune that it was blocked by grey radiant armour, a few inches away from Leylin's body.

“With the defense of the Fallen Star Pendant, I don't have to fear most of the acolytes' attacks. Along with the frost runes' enhancement of a greatsword, combined with my Knight's abilities, it is one of the top strengths amongst acolytes!”

Leylin was very satisfied with this battle's outcome.

Saurun was only an acolyte who was slightly less inferior than Torash. When Leylin, however, used his techniques, he could not withstand even a few rounds before being completely defeated, even with his head being chopped off.

“It's your turn now!” Leylin kicked Saurun's corpse away and charged towards the female blond acolyte.

“It’s completed!”

At the same time, the female blond acolyte exhaled, as if shouldering a huge burden.

A bright red flower unfolded its petals and revealed a green rock the size of a fist. It had a dazzling gleam, with the female blond acolyte’s fresh blood that was sprayed on it. There was also a broken half of a dagger, which was thrown on the floor.

These 3 items faintly resembled a triangular formation, with many greyish power runes surrounding them.

As Leylin’s charged forward fiercely, the female blond acolyte smirked and pointed at Leylin, “By the name of Memphis Rofar Maginent, of the Gigantic Binding Sprite from the abyss, the person that I point to will lose all ability of motion!”

Weng Weng!

Light began to shine from the triangular formation, and Leylin suddenly felt a huge binding strength engulfing him, which made him rooted to the spot.

“A spell like this? A human customised spell?”

Leylin continuously writhed and the sounds of shackles sounded

from the void.

“There is no cause for you to resist further. These are the chains of the Gigantic Binding Abyss Sprite. No matter how many of them you break, the remaining amount would not only regrow, but the binding power will also be doubled!”

As the female acolyte spoke, Leylin felt the chain getting tighter and tighter around his body.

Chi! The silver glow from the Fallen Star Pendant continuously clashed against strength from the void, time to time producing white mist.

“You despicable maggot, the shameless murderer, you dared to killed the acolytes from two of our great academies, so I will grant you death to redeem your sins!”

The thrill of revenge and smugness filled the face of the female acolyte. The muscles on her face contorted, turning the once-beautiful face into an extremely loathsome one.

“You dared to kill Saurun; I will make you pay the price of blood!”

The female acolyte pointed at Leylin, “Strength! Deprivation!”

As she spoke, Leylin felt the strength in his body dispersing. In an instant, it was as if he changed from a Knight into a regular human

infant.

“This feeling, have I been cursed?”

Leylin continuously struggled, “Such a measly curse, how can it make me bow my head!”

“It all has ended!” The female acolyte chanted in an incantation, “Flames of the abyss, cremate this sinner into ashes!”

As soon as the Byron language incantation had been uttered, a black fire suddenly blazed from below Leylin’s body.

The flame continuously spread, engulfing Leylin’s whole body in an instant.

Peng! The frost greatsword on Leylin’s hands fell onto the floor. The icy shards shattered and broke into many pieces. Finally, even the refined metal blade of the cross blade melted under the black red flames, turning into a puddle of liquid metal.

Chi Chi!

The grey armour on Leylin’s body started to give in, and the A.I. Chip wildly flashed its alert in front of Leylin’s eyes, [Warning! Warning! The energy from the Fallen Star Pendant is rapidly decreasing. Currently left with: 45%. Estimated to be fully depleted in 34 seconds!]

“Ignore it and release all the energy within the Fallen Star Pendant in one go!” Leylin ordered.

“Weng Weng!” In that moment, the silver-grey light increased its radiance by a dozen times. Behind his back, there was an indistinct huge cross phantom. On the upper area of the phantom cross, a few jewels continuously gave off multi-coloured light as a wave of energy extended to Leylin’s limbs.

“Break...for me!”

Leylin struggled with all his might, and suddenly, crackling and rattling sounds could he heard from his body, and the countless black-rune-inscribed chains became visible and broke from all the struggling done by Leylin. They then fell to the ground and vanished.

“It’s your turn now, you disgusting whore!”

Leylin’s figure flew like a gust of wind and appeared directly in front of the female acolyte.

“Im...Impossible, how did you manage to counter it?” shrieked the female blonde acolyte and she pointed her finger at Leylin. Then several basin-sized fireballs directly struck Leylin’s body.

Boom! The flames exploded, burning with the previous black fire, as it extinguished very soon.

Behind the silver grey transparent armour, Leylin was unscathed.

“No! No!” The female acolyte fell onto the ground and crawled backwards.

Leylin kicked the green rock and dagger on the ground, breaking the spell formation.

Two streams of red fluid trickled down from the female acolyte’s nose, even her tears were falling.

“No! Don’t kill me! My mentor is....”

The female acolyte snivelled continuously as she crawled and spoke.

“I don’t care who you are!” Leylin’s expression appeared indifferent as he embraced this blonde woman.

The Fallen Star Pendant kept defending his body from the abyss black fire that was still burning on his body, but this female acolyte obviously did not have a similar layer of defense. Upon being the barbecued by the flames, she gave an ear-piercing shriek.

Sssii! The flesh of the girl dropped, chunk by chunk, onto the floor, turning into a pile of charred mess.

Finally, the originally beautiful female acolyte turned into a blood red skeleton. Moreover, the set of bones slowly melted, turning into a white liquid which dripped onto the floor

Leylin grimaced and with his hand, he swept away the remainder of the white bone liquid that were on him.

After which, as if he were changing his clothes, he ‘took off’ the grey armour.

As for the black red abyss flame on the grey armour, it was also removed.

“In the legends and tales told by the bards, the abyss fire is something which can burn the void. An existence that all children of the earth cannot resist! This is most likely just a projection of the true abyss fire— it does not have even one zillionth of the original’s might. If not, I would have long turned into ashes!”

Leylin thought for a while, before returning to the original place. He then recorded all of the ingredients and the spell formation that the female acolyte used before roaming the battlefield to collect his spoils of war.

Peng! The unconscious Jayden was tossed before Bicky.

Although the battle earlier was extremely intense, the time that had passed was extremely short — so much so that Bicky was still

in shock.

“Hurry and leave this place. The energy waves from earlier would attract many acolytes over. If you don’t wish to die, hurry and leave now!”

Leylin cleared his throat and looked at Bicky who nodded her head before he left the place.

Looking at the back of Leylin, Bicky’s expression was extremely complicated.

This person was here to save her. Moreover, the strength that he possessed was far above that which Bicky could imagine.

Lightning Wielder, Silver Claw, they were all impressive and notable acolytes from the opposing academies. However in front of that person earlier, they were as weak as a sponge when they pleaded and was slaughtered mercilessly.

“But. . . exactly who is he?”

Bicky blinked her eyes. Merlin, Leylin, Fayle and the others, all of the acolytes’ images flashed past from her memory, yet she felt helpless as there was no such person in all of the acolytes that she recalled that resembled her savior.

However, her instincts told her that she definitely knew this person and that they had an extremely intimate relationship!

“Magi are reputed for their rationality. Such a thing like instinct will lower our judgment. Everything has to be proved beyond refutation....”

The sayings of an elder surfaced in her mind.

Bicky’s expression was seemingly vacant as she gritted her teeth and poured a potion on Jayden’s face, before she,too, left that place.

Although Jayden was Molly’s idol, she was now dead. Naturally Bicky wouldn’t risk anymore for Jayden.

Minutes later, Jayden opened his eyes and got up.

“What happened to me? Where is Torash?”

Jayden was at a loss, before the colours on his face changed. Touching his chest, he felt for the Magic Artifact which was still resting in his arms. Moreover, when he ensured that his sack was present, only then did he heave a sigh of relief.

“This is the aftermath of an intense battle! Who is it that saved me?”

Jayden scratched his forehead, before thinking of a girl’s figure who had dashed towards him, “Was it Molly? Such a terrifying

battle, I wonder how she is....”

“Here!” Footsteps sounds drew closer and very soon 2 acolytes appeared within Jayden’s vision.

“An acolyte from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! Kill him!”

After seeing Jayden, the two acolytes let off an excited howl and began to prepare their Rank 0 spells.

Jayden sighed, before bringing out his Magic Artifact once again...

Leylin was, by now, dozens of miles away from this battlefield. He was settled in a cave, checking his spoils.

Those 3 acolytes were well known for their strengths. Furthermore, the ingredients and Magic Crystals that they carried with them were plentiful. They gave Leylin a total of tens of thousands of Magic Crystals and other valuable resources.

Leylin felt the surface of a black red diary cover, and he exclaimed in glee, “This aura is rather similar to the female acolyte’s abyss fire!”

Leylin flipped open the diary and a mysterious rune appeared, “A.I. Chip, compare to database!”

[Beep! Mission establishing, comparison in progress! Similarity level to Abyss script: 98.7%, Purgatory script: 45.3%....]

“Abyss script?” Leylin had a headache. Characters and knowledge from these mysterious planes were top-secrets and the knowledge was not passed around. He only managed to understand a few runes from derelict pages of a book in the library and stored them into the A.I. Chip database.

“No matter what, it is a good spoil!”

Satisfied, Leylin kept the black red diary in his possession.

Chapter 97: Conclusion

What followed next was the most valuable loot this time around.

Leylin looked at the pile of items in front of him and muttered irresolutely to himself.

There were a few broken items, a dagger which had been broken into half, the remnant of a silver palm, with an incomplete silver necklace, with lightning flashing time to time.

The 3 acolytes who died under Leylin's hands were the potential Magi of the enemy academies, so how could they not have Magic Artifacts on them?

It was a pity, however, that the broken dagger from the female blonde acolyte was only used to summon the aura of the abyss, and Leylin was still unable to figure out how the other items were meant to be used.

As for Silver-Claw Saurun, he was totally a pervert, who actually infused the Magic Artifact into his own palm.

Leylin could only chop the whole palm down, to try to separate the various properties in the Magic Artifact.

As for Torash, the Magic Artifact on him had also destroyed itself, which was the reason why he could unleash an attack of 16 degrees at the end.

The probing of Magic Artifacts was an extremely dangerous task. Before further information, Leylin did not dare to risk and use these items.

Moreover, who knows if there were some booby trap laid within the Magic Artifacts by the enemy, thus Leylin felt that he should be more cautious.

If he discovered that they might cause trouble to him, no matter how much Leylin was reluctant to part with them he would still toss them away within this secret plane.

After all, he did not wish for an official Magus to notice him.

“Actually, there is still a Magic Artifact that can be easily obtained! That is the green vine badge on Jayden’s body!”

Leylin saw Jayden use this Magic Artifact on the Dirigible before, back when he used it to suppress Kaliweir, leaving a strong impression on Leylin’s memory.

However, this badge was given to him by Professor Dorotte.

As for Dorotte, he was an official Magus in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. If Leylin snatched an enemy’s Magic Artifact and hid in the academy, he might be safe. However if he took Jayden’s, then Leylin wouldn’t be able to stay in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy anymore.

During the academy's critical moments, if the news that he was still causing harm to fellow acolytes got out, then Leylin's name would be equivalent to the despised street rat, in the Magus World.

He would not lose his rationality for just this little benefit.

“There is this also!”

Leylin flicked his hands, and two differently shaped badges appeared in his hands.

This were the badges of Saurun and the female blonde acolyte. Although they were weaker than Torash by a little, but it was still worth at least 20 to 30 contribution points.

“At first, I'll just hold onto these. If I'm able to find other badges in future then I won't exchange these!”

These two badges were Leylin's insurance. If he was able to collect other badges in the secret plane to accumulate 50 contribution points, then he wouldn't use these.

However, if the contribution points were not enough, then Leylin had no choice, and could only hand over one of them or both.

As for Torash, Leylin felt that his strength was of great

importance to his academy and the person backing Torash would have spent enormous efforts in nurturing him and so it was better to not provoke him.

.....

Two days passed.

The wilderness found outside the secret plane was lit up with a bright yellow color. From time to time, there were gusts of wind blowing granules of sand, and the living organisms on the ground avoided this place at all cost — even the moles and ants were not an exception.

The entrance to the secret plane was slowly shrinking as if it were a live animal.

Outside of the entrance, the 3 chairmen and all the professors looked at the entrance that was constantly glowing with varying colours and had different expressions on their faces.

Siley looked at the silver hourglass floating in midair. On the upper half of the hourglass, beads of golden sand trickled downwards, finally leaving behind a thin layer.

Di! With the passing of time, the final golden bead of sand trickled downward.

“The time is up, let us receive our acolytes!” Siley opened his

mouth and spoke in a low tone.

“Are you extremely anxious?” Guru who was at the side smirked, “Every minute more that passes, one acolyte in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy will be slain. Their heads will become the glory of my Sage Gotham’s Hut, and hung on the large gates....”

“At this moment, the secret plane might no longer have anymore Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes. We all know that once the acolytes from the two academies have gathered, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s acolytes would be meat on a chopping board for us to slice, and is not even equivalent to a lamb.

The other blonde women smiled — but her smiled seemed somewhat malicious.

“Nicola, you still can’t let it go?” Finally, a trace of expression surfaced on Siley’s face, and it seemed to be - regret?

“I have long since forgotten the matters from the past!” The female blonde woman Nicola said with a frosty expression.

“You can seek revenge for the matters previously, but once you are bent on destroying this academy that I succeeded as a professor, then you will be my eternal nemesis!”

Siley’s face too gradually hardened.

“Haha...Haha... You are still as arrogant as before, thinking that

you are the main character of some novel, which the earth would revolve around you indefinitely!”

“However such an expression makes me want to puke!” Said the blonde woman as her eyes appeared to emit flames.

“I want to destroy your life’s work, destroy the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, even if there is the Lighthouse of the Night mediating, this time, there is still the next time....”

“Enough!” Guru at the side interrupted Nicola.

“Earlier you did not stop me and Siley from fighting, but why is it that you can’t endure it now?”

“My reason for stopping you was because I want to take action myself!” Nicola’s maniacal look grew even stronger.

“Enough!” A dense black colour descended, and covered the sky in an instant.

Amidst the darkness, there was a bright yellow light that came from within, revealing a figure that was wrapped in black robes.

“Sir!” The three chairmen bowed.

They were only Rank 2 Magus, yet this person in front of them was a true Rank 3 Magus! Every level in the Magus World had an

obvious difference like that between the sky and earth.

Previously, it was this Sir that suppressed the 3 of them to mediate the war.

“Since my Lighthouse of the Night has already stepped in, any conflicts that arise after is deemed as a provocation to us, as the contract and date are still effective.”

The black-robed man had a pair of dark green eyes. No matter if it was Siley or the other 2 chairman, if these eyes landed on them, they would shudder as if being trapped by some magical beast.

This feeling of imminent death finally brought Nicola out from her madness.

“From now, activate the spell formation, and receive the acolytes within the secret plane!”

“Yes, Sir!”

Peng!

A fiery explosion erupted, and set the acolytes behind Leylin on fire, turning them into ashes.

Leylin’s footsteps did not stop as he continued to escape.

“It’s him who killed Seet, Kroc, and Old Eagle, don’t let him escape!”

Behind him, parties of Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle acolytes were formed, a standard party of seven, which continuously gave chase.

Leylin’s pursuers gradually drew closer.

Peng! Leylin flung another two explosive potions again, where flames continuously extended behind him.

The acolytes yelled and Leylin drew a longer distance from them.

“Damn it!” Leylin’s face was downcast.

After killing the 3 acolytes previously, Leylin began his hunting movement all alone again.

At first, it was rather smooth sailing, where he collected another Level 3 Acolyte’s badge. This time, he specifically chose those who were rather old or those with no powerful items on them. They were those who seemed not able to advance further and had no strong backing behind them.

During the later half of the second day, all of the enemy camp acolytes had already gathered and formed group spell formations!

All of them were performed by Level 2 or 3 Acolyte groups. If their numbers were sufficient, even a Rank 1 Magus had to seek retreat temporarily.

Leylin had no choice, so he could only conceal himself and stop his hunt.

With the detection of the A.I. Chip, he managed to successfully hide until this day.

Things went according to how he had predicted: after the acolytes had gathered, they formed smaller squadrons and made a thorough search of the secret plane. They maintained a wanting-to-kill-every-last-enemy posture.

Many Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes were immediately killed, and under the opponent's immense pressure, they could not even resist.

Leylin even saw a Level 3 Acolyte who carried a Magic Artifact, but that acolyte could only survive for a few more minutes under the spell formation. Afterward, he was ripped to shreds by the countless Rank 0 spells that befell on him. Even the Magic Artifact became the trophy prize for his opponents.

Leylin could only extend his sympathisation to this fellow acolyte, and covered his tracks even more covertly.

Fortunately, the methods of magicians were extremely strange,

and the opponents were only two academies who could not completely be harmonious amongst themselves. This gave the acolytes of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy a chance for survival!

After Leylin estimated that time was almost up, he immediately ambushed a small party, since he was one badge short of his goal.

According to his estimation, once he kills the opponents, then the time would be up, where he would even be teleported out and not need to face the group's counterattack.

“Fuck! This lack of punctuality will have people killed!”

Of course, Leylin wouldn't expect that the time would be delayed due to the enmity of the chairmen, which resulted in an error to his calculations.

After killing one of the Level 3 Acolyte, he was immediately surrounded and attacked.

“The Fallen Star Pendant's energy was fully consumed the last time and I have not recharged it. If not I could have escaped long ago!”

Leylin gritted his teeth and gave an order, “A.I. Chip! Detect the geographical area and calculation the best retreat route!”

[Beep! Mission establishing!]

Along with the A.I. Chip's indication, Leylin began to make various unexpected ducking movements amidst the dense forest, slowly pulling the distance further away from the pursuing acolytes.

“I have finally escaped!”

After running for over a dozen miles and shaking off his pursuers, suddenly he felt dizzy, and the badge pinned to his chest glowed resplendently.

“Fuck, the teleportation is finally here!”

Chapter 98: Murderer Identified

The badge on Leylin's chest emitted a fluorescent light.

Leylin's entire body was then engulfed by a layer of this light and was lifted off the ground as he began to involuntarily rise into the sky.

Floating at a distance within the light bubble, Leylin saw other acolytes in distant regions also floating in the same manner; they looked like stars strewn across the sky.

“This is really a beautiful scene!”

Leylin couldn't help sighing in appreciation. His hand touched a badge and holding it he said, “There is no force felt from this badge, it seems that the pulling force of the badge only works on those acolytes who are still alive. If that's the case!”

Leylin waved his hands, and 2 badges that belonged to two Level 3 Acolytes was tossed out of the light bubble.

These two badges had, at one time, belonged to Silver-Claw Saurun and the female blonde acolyte. Since Leylin had already collected sufficient badges, he would no longer keep these two with him.

“I also have this thing with me!” said Leylin, as he withdrew an iron chain that had an electrical current and also threw that away.

After a thorough examination by the A.I. Chip on this destroyed Magic Artifact, there was a hidden Spiritual Force within it which kept pulsating — it seemed that this force had a tracking ability. If Leylin were to bring this item with him, then the professors of the enemy academy would know immediately that he was the one who had killed Torash.

As for the other items taken from the acolytes — the half dagger and the shattered palm — there were no problems if he brought them back with him. They were carefully placed within his rucksack.

“The final procedure!”

Leylin smiled heartily, and removed the Shapeshifting spell.

The muscles on his face contorted, as his height continuously grew. Very soon, Leylin resumed the state of his original appearance.

“I have been acting inside the secret plane with this disguise, where no one had seen my true appearance!”

“I’m afraid after I exit, the enemy academy would wildly search for an acolyte that doesn’t exist?” After thinking of the probable scene in the future, he could not help but smile.

“Right now, I am Leylin Farlier, an ordinary Potioneering

acolyte!”

.....

Looking at the dazzling rainbow coloured exit, Leylin’s smile widened yet even more....

With much effort, Leylin managed to suppress the dizziness that came abruptly and did not vomit.

“The feeling of crossing planes is not a great one!”

“Hurry up and move, don’t block the way!” A cold voice sounded right beside Leylin’s ear.

Leylin hurriedly bowed and left the place.

Only then, did he take a look at the surroundings.

Outside the exit of the secret plane, it looked the same as before. The 3 academies were divided into a triangular formation where they faced each other. Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle members stood closer together, and faced the common enemy, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, in unison.

As for now, acolytes continuously swarmed out from the exit, returning back to their respective professor’s side.

“Who is that person?”

Leylin saw a black robed man ahead of the 3 chairmen. He couldn't help guessing the person's identity.

Shua! But now, because the black-robed man felt Leylin's unwavering sight upon him, he turned his head around and looked back.

He immediately glanced upon a pair of dark green eyes.

The surrounding world was as if it had been suspended in time; everywhere one could see only green.

The acolytes and professors around Leylin seemed to turned into jade statues where no signs of life could be observed.

Leylin strove to open his mouth, but he found no words coming out of his mouth.

“Leylin! Leylin! Leylin!”

The surrounding statues suddenly opened their mouths, chanting Leylin's name.

“What is happening?” Leylin roared within his heart, but not a single word could be spoken.

Peng! Peng The dark green sculptures began to move and green dust constantly fell off of them. Their eyes had become red-colored, as if the sockets had been embedded with rubies.

.....

Countless green statues swarmed around Leylin, drowning him....

“Argh!” Leylin suddenly regained consciousness and panted heavily.

“What happened earlier?” The surrounding acolytes now seemed to be doing fine, yet Leylin did not dare to look in the direction of those chairmen again.

“Relax, son!” A pair of hands with a medicinal scent covered Leylin’s head, emitting a white glowing light.

“Professor Kroft!” Leylin bowed deeply. Under the white light, he felt much better.

“Was it you who saved me?”

“I did not exactly ‘save’ you, only a small favour.” Professor Kroft smiled and led Leylin back towards their academy’s gathering area.

“Official Magi always have a defensive force field surrounding

them. Moreover, most of it are instantly activated or have a permanent effect. As for higher ranking Magi, they have an even stronger force field encircling them at all times. An ordinary acolyte cannot even get close to them!”

Kroft explained for Leylin.

“Just now, that Magus from the Lighthouse of the Night did not do it intentionally; he just looked over this side and immediately many apprentices got caught in a hallucination. If a professor wasn’t here, then I would have been. . . ”

Kroft’s expression slowly turned stern, “Leylin, before you turn into an official Magus, remember to steer clear of any high ranking Magus! If not, I would not even be able to imagine your end....”

“I’ll keep that in mind!” Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn as he nodded his head.

Only a slight glance had almost cost Leylin his life, which left him a lingering fear. Moreover it had resolved his determination to climb up in the ranks of the food chain.

“I don’t wish for my soul to crumble immediately in the future just because a high ranking Magus crosses my path in the future. This would really be a grievance!”

Although higher ranking Magus could exercise restraint on their forcefields, it would mean that they were showing their softer side.

Leylin could not imagine anyone doing that for him.

“Alright now! Welcome back son!”

After healing Leylin, Kroft revealed a sincere smile.

“Being able to see you again is really great!” Leylin also smiled as he hugged his professor.

At this moment, only then he had time to view the casualties in his own academy.

Due to the teaming up of the other two academies, a huge number of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s acolytes had perished previously in the war. Right now it seems that Abyssal Bone Forest Academy suffered an even more severe casualty count.

At this moment, behind the professors, there was only a few scattered acolytes standing behind him. Most of them carried injuries with a gloomy expression.

“Leylin!” A pleasantly surprised voiced sounded in his ear.

“Bicky!” Leylin smiled warmly and hugged the curvaceous and beautiful Bicky.

“Very good. I still believed in you....” Tears welled up in Bicky’s eyes.

It seemed like she was worried about Leylin but that she did not know he was the mysterious man who had saved her before.

Leylin took another look at Bicky and was rather surprised when she was actually not injured the slightest, only that her mental state did not seem to be in the best condition. He could not help but feel so as even if it was a Level 3 Acolyte from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, under the oppression in numbers from their enemy, they may not be able to protect their lives.

As if seeing Leylin's bewilderment, Bicky spoke on her own accord, "I met Molly right after entering. Also, I met with an extremely powerful enemy acolyte, but a stranger saved me. After that, I met Fayle and it was him who kept me by his side, so I was able to live up till now.

Bicky pointed at an acolyte behind a professor.

Leylin looked over, and it was indeed Fayle who he saw before. After a span of 3 years, he seemed to be even more mature and had more charisma.

With a Level 3 Acolyte protecting her coupled with some luck, it was probable that she could survive. Leylin nodded his head and did not ask further.

After casually exchanging a few sentences with Bicky, Leylin looked at the secret plane's exit. Most of them were enemy acolytes streaming out, where very few Abyssal Bone Forest Academy

acolytes came out. Leylin sighed inwardly, “It seems that this time Abyssal Bone Forest Academy suffered a great loss. I’m afraid that there will be a scenario where Abyssal Bone Forest Academy would have more professors than acolytes period of time.

Peng! At this moment, another acolyte walked out from the exit.

This acolyte wore the grey robes of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and had several holes in them. Injuries seemed to riddle his body and there were even traces of blood. Moreover, an arm was missing.

“It’s Jayden!” Leylin’s pupils contracted.

Towards magicians, missing a limb was no big issue. There were various and mysterious spells which could regrow their limbs.

Jayden braced himself and walked several steps forward. After seeing his professor from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, he smiled and fainted immediately.

Shua! A white figure immediately appeared in front of Jayden and caught him.

After the white flash stopped, Leylin saw the appearance of the Magus within - It was a skeleton with an underworld flame in its eyes!

“Professor Dorotte!” Leylin called out the name of this set of

bones.

Previously, it was Dorotte who led Leylin into Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Moreover, he was Jayden's mentor and even gave Jayden a Magic Artifact. It seemed like he doted on Jayden rather much.

“Alright! After my detection, there are no more surviving acolytes inside the secret plane. Seal the exit!”

The black robed figure standing before the 3 chairmen spoke.

Once he spoke, the 2 camps sank into deep silence, before the murmuring and sighing noises sounded incessantly.

“No! Where is my Torash? He is definitely still inside!”

“Silver-Claw Saurun? Hurry and come out! He is a genius acolyte, how could the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy manage to defeat him?”

.....

“Morphis! Morphis, where are you?”

Constant cries were heard from the enemy camp.

And the Abyssal bone Forest Academy's party seemed to have already expected this. Although the numbers of dead acolytes were many, the reactions of all professors were much lower than what Leylin had expected.

Even for the Potioneering talent Merlin, his responsible Professor (Kroft) only let out a soft dismal gasp upon receiving news of his death.

“Torash! Torash! I left Spiritual Force coordinates on his body; he should be present amongst us here!”

On the opposite side, a blue bearded old guy yelled madly, following which he chanted an incantation.

Bang!

A bright blue beam of light drifted floated above Jayden who had fainted. Within this light an indistinct badge of an acolyte could be seen .

“Argh! No! My Torash! I will kill you!”

The expression on the face of the blue bearded old guy contorted, where a massive thunderstorm appeared midair above him.

“Torash's power, when compared to this, is absolutely rubbish.” Leylin gulped, and suddenly felt extremely lucky.

Chapter 99: Grine Water

“Inside the secret plane, one must take responsibility for themselves in the bloodbath; do you wish to violate the agreement?”

Under the massive thunderstorm, Dorotte stood up with many faint silver beast claws on his back.

“Enough!”

The black-robed figure standing in front of the 3 chairmen spoke, and a gigantic dark green hand grabbed at the sky. Weng Weng! The massive lightning was immediately scattered by the giant hand.

“I have said before to abide by the agreement!” The black-robed figure growled.

At the same time, the blue-bearded geezer spurted a huge mouthful of blood. Anger was quickly replaced with fear as he knelt down, “Sir, please forgive an old man, who has just lost his nephew, with your magnanimity!”

“Just this once! If not, I will extract your soul and roast it in the abyss for ten thousand years!”

The black-robed figure spoke again.

The blue-bearded geezer then went back to his academy's camp, before giving Jayden a vicious look.

This hatred and determination of killing Jayden gave Dorotte a headache. Crackling and rattling noises could be heard from the skeletal figure.

“Although this time nothing has happened, Jayden will definitely be pursued by Blue-Beard unless he keeps hiding inside the academy!”

Leylin's eyes turned cold.

Earlier, the A.I. Chip picked up several traces of energy waves from spells.

Obviously, it was the search for the enemy who had killed their genius acolyte! If Leylin were to still keep those items that carried their traces, his outcome would now be the same as Jayden.

Those professors who had had their personal apprentices or successors killed by the other party — who was also their sworn enemy — swore they would make the killer pay with their blood!

As for the casualties of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, they were not considered because the other two academies were facing many more losses.

Although they were bound by the agreement and vigilance of the

Lighthouse of the Night, as far as Magi were concerned, if they were to pay the price, they could indirectly find a way to exact their revenge!

For example, not taking action themselves, but suggesting to Magi outside of the agreement to act on their behalf. The black market was also an option worth considering.

.....

Late in the night, Leylin returned to his resting area and laid down on his bed. In his hands was a faint yellow test tube that he kept on toying with.

The test tube was made of faint yellow crystals, and its density was extremely high. Holding it in his hands, he sensed a rather heavy feeling.

These crystals were made from a precious ingredient - Nitrogen Crystals. Any spell that was 20 degrees or lesser would not be able to damage it.

Using these Nitrogen Crystals to make a test tube — this was often used to store potions which were more valuable.

According to the olden texts, test tube made from Nitrogen Crystals were known to have preserved the contents even after a thousand years.

Within the faint yellow test tube, there was a ball of translucent liquid.

Leylin casually swirled the test tube. Under the refraction of the light, the liquid within gave off a rainbow-coloured glow, as it continuously whirled, seemingly beautiful.

“This is the Grine Water of the myths which could aid acolytes to breakthrough into an official Magus!” Leylin looked at the test tube and muttered.

Earlier, under the suppression of the Magus from Lighthouse of the Night, the chairmen of Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle had had no choice but to bow their heads, then leading their acolytes away.

Even Torash’s professor was not that stupid to offend the high ranking Magus for the second time.

As for Leylin and the rest, they were led back to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy by their professors.

Leylin intentionally glanced and saw that at this moment the acolytes in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy did not amount to over 50.

As for any regular academy, they would have thousands of acolytes!

One can say that Sage Gotham's Hut and Whitewoods Castle had accomplished their mission by almost swallowing the entire batch of successors in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy; if it were not for the fact that a few of their genius acolytes had perished inside the secret plane!

Even so, they originally had 200 acolytes enter the secret plane. Yet in the end only about a hundred came out from it.

Compared to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, this was considered a great victory.

"However... All these have nothing to do with me!" Leylin looked at the potion in his hands that seemed like an illusion.

"What matters is that I got the Grine Water! Moreover, the academy has an anonymous exchange policy, which is extremely thoughtful for its acolytes!"

On the way back to the academy, Leylin and the fortunate surviving acolytes were told about the contribution points they obtained and the details of it, where they can undergo the exchange privately.

Furthermore, the person that was in charge of the exchange was an alchemy beast created by the chairman with no human feelings whatsoever, so it wouldn't reveal the acolytes' exchanges.

One can say that although Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was

extremely bloodthirsty, where there was a strong culture of the strong eats the weak, towards the protection of acolytes with true strength and abilities, they still did a rather good job.

Leylin only barely managed to scrape 50 contribution points, exchanging for a standard amount of Grine Water.

As for the catalogue on the contribution points exchange list, there were various precious ingredients, Rank 1 spell models, and even Spiritual Force Potions. Looking on, Leylin felt overwhelmed by it.

At that time, deep down Leylin had some regret over not taking the few genius acolytes' badges along with him.

However, after seeing Jayden with a gloomy expression, Leylin very soon buried this tinge of regret deep inside his heart.

Although Torash's badge was worth at least 50 contribution points, which could be exchanged with many resources, the look that other acolytes had when they saw Jayden was full of pity.

Incurring the wrath of an official Magus for these resources, was it really worth it?

Moreover, the other professors did not know of their apprentices' scores, yet Dorotte knew Jayden's amount of contribution points like the back of his hand. Before anything else, at the very least, half of Torash's contribution points would be

taken by Dorotte.

After all, he defended an opposing Rank 1 Magus for Jayden!

“Before becoming an official Magus, it is best to maintain a low profile. There won’t be anything wrong with that!” Seeing Jayden’s outcome, Leylin steeled his heart with this resolve.

His senior Merlin was a great example of this.

Merlin’s achievements and talent in Potioneering could be said to be extraordinary. If not for Leylin cheating by using the A.I. Chip, he would definitely be left far behind in this aspect.

But so what?

It was due to Merlin’s reputation that made his enemies concentrate their attacks on him, finally causing him to die during the secret plane’s bloodbath.

No matter how genius an acolyte was before they manage to grow strong, they weren’t even comparable to a pebble on the road.

As for Leylin, he always created the false image of being inferior to Merlin, allowing Merlin to attract the attention off from him. He successfully managed to divert his enemy’s attention, so there were very few that bothered about him inside the secret plane.

“However, this trick will not work for the time being!”

Leylin toyed with the Grine Water in his hands, his face gradually turning solemn.

The surviving acolytes after the bloodbath amounted to less than 50, which was even less than the number of professors.

Moreover, all survivors will be deemed as elites!

Under these circumstances, greater attention will be paid to any acolytes!

Leylin did not have any confidence whatsoever to try anything funny for the fear of being discovered.

“Perhaps, I should make a trip outside. Previously, Roman spoke of the high-grade meditation technique. If I found it, it would definitely be much better than the Grine Water...”

Previously, before the Fallen Star Pendant was completed, Leylin had managed to swindle much information from that vengeful spirit, Roman, regarding the information of high-grade meditation technique left behind by the Great Magus Serholm.

According to Roman, the inheritance of Great Magus Serholm was located inside the Dylan Gardens of the Zither Moon Mountain Plains.

Magi who used high-grade meditation techniques were definitely stronger than Magi who used the Grine Water to breakthrough! Moreover, more potential would be realised, revealing more possibilities for future development.

Leylin wanted to climb to the apex of the Magus World. If he wished to have the potential for future advancements, using the Grine Water to breakthrough would be his last resort.

Thinking of the Fallen Star Pendant, Leylin removed the silvery grey cross from his neck.

On the surface of the cross was embedded with various colours of gemstones, which looked to be an impeccable art piece.

However, right now the gemstones on the Fallen Star Pendant seemed to glow dimly, as it had undergone a huge consumption.

[Fallen Star Pendant: Low-grade Magic Artifact. Effect: Instantly cast a defence. Current condition: All energy consumed, 0%]

The A.I. Chip showed the stats of the Fallen Star Pendant to Leylin.

Fallen Star Pendant — it was the item that attributed the most to Leylin's survival and killing the geniuses of the enemy this time.

The instantaneous layer of defense that the silvery cross radiated, no matter if it was physical or magical resistance, had reached a very high degree. Few below the ranks of an official Magus could penetrate its defenses.

However, in any world, the law of conservation of energy must be fulfilled. Every time the Fallen Star Pendant was activated, it required a consumption of energy. Once the energy was fully consumed, it wouldn't be anything more than a pretty necklace!

“The Fallen Star Pendant's defence is rather good, only that the energy is not enough!”

Leylin felt somewhat regretful, “A.I. Chip! Establish mission. Apart from the calculation ability for the Host, use all remaining computation abilities to find out ways to conserve the energy of the Fallen Star Pendant!”

[Beep! Mission establishing! Beginning to use idle processes to calculate, time is unknown!] The A.I. Chip's voice intoned.

Leylin nodded his head and came to the experiment at the side. He placed the Fallen Star Pendant in the centre of a mysterious spell formation. Around it, were many blue glittering stones.

“Activating process of recharging!”

Weng Weng! With the command of Leylin, faint blue light beams shone from the formation. Starlight was extracted from these

stones and placed into the Fallen Star Pendant.

[Fallen Star Pendant recharging in process, current state: 1%....]
The A.I. Chip's voice intoned.

The recharge of the Fallen Star Pendant actually only required for starlight to be shone on it. As long as it was bathed in starlight when the energy was fully consumed, the Fallen Star Pendant would automatically complete the recharging process.

However, in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, wanting to bathe it in starlight was an impossible task. Thus, Leylin could only use other methods to conduct the recharging process.

Chapter 100: An Exception

Time passed by.

The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy's professors and acolytes had gradually recovered from all these sad events and adapted themselves to the present situation.

The current Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had almost become a tomb.

Within such a great academy, one would rarely see another soul.

The classrooms were vacant, the Trading Area was left uninhabited and even the academy's mission area — which has a large, wide wall; on which the missions were hung up — only had a few acolytes accepting missions.

The entire Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had sunk into a stillness as silent and steady as a grave.

In these circumstances, if an ordinary person were to stay here, he would be frightened to death!

However; the great thing was that the acolytes who survived the bloodbath, as well as other professors, were extremely resolute; so they were able to maintain the operations of the academy, even under such circumstances.

However, these state of affairs would not last very long.

According to Leylin's guess, the enrollment period for new acolytes joining the academies of the South Coast was fast approaching.

This time, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy would certainly lower their requirements. Then a large number of acolytes would be able to join and thus reinstate the glory on the surface.

But the nurturing of any talented acolyte will consume a vast amount of time and energy, and not to mention the aptitude of 5th-grade acolytes — where and how would it be easy to find one with such a talent?

The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy's heritage had declined drastically during Leylin's generation. It was likely that at least 10 years would be required to regain their former level of glory.

However, Leylin wasn't greatly concerned about these issues.

He once again returned to a thread-like monotonous life — he would cooperate with his professor in his experiments and thus learn from experience.

Meanwhile, he took advantage of the privileges granted to a Level 3 Acolyte — he purchased large amounts of magical resources and stored information on advanced subjects.

Leylin's aptitude in the Magus World was considered average, neither high nor low, but it was rather decent.

Moreover, he had succeeded in advancing to a Level 3 Acolyte. In the future, there would be plenty of time for him to breakthrough into an official Magus!

Considering this point, regardless of a professor or an acolyte, all would regard him as a person of very great importance.

Whenever Leylin encounters an official Magus, he would greet them. In return, they would nod their heads in recognition and approval. Also, when acolytes see Leylin from afar, they would immediately greet him.

As for Nyssa and the rest, they did not dare to appear in front of Leylin.

Thinking of Nyssa, Leylin could not help but feel happy for her. In such a bloodbath, she was actually able to preserve her life and even obtain a few contribution points, which was an extremely difficult thing to do.

He overheard that Nyssa had been able to exchange her contribution points for a potion to increase Spiritual Force and was preparing to breakthrough to Level 3 Acolyte.

"I hope she succeeds! To heal her body, she needs to, at least, become a proper Magus!"

Leylin thought of Nyssa's injuries and was somewhat dismayed. Right now, in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy; there was only himself, Nyssa, and Jayden who hailed from the Chernobyl Islands.

These thoughts only passed through Leylin's mind. Very soon, he concentrated on the book in front of him.

The book in his hands was extremely thick, the same thickness of two bricks together. However, the paper's surface was extremely small. This was the style of ancient books.

“Mother Earth laid down on the ground and gave birth to 7 children. They are Anger, Sorrow, Greed, Sloth, Lust, Gluttony, and Fear. Each of her children inherited one of their mother's power, where they could rip apart mountains and part seas....”

The book in Leylin's hands concerned myths.

“The ancient writing is extremely obscure, in it, many information about Magi is concealed...”

Leylin's eyes flashed as he commanded, “A.I. Chip! Record!”

Ever since Leylin registered under the administrative area and became a potential Magus, he managed to obtain more access within Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

One of this was to peruse the hidden library section!

Of course, within these books, many information regarding official Magus were erased. At the very most, they were briefly mentioned in passing, with cryptic writings. Normally, people would just gloss over this information.

Even so, Leylin with the A.I. Chip obtained much more information from this hidden library section.

First of all, the A.I. Chip had recorded almost all information that was beneath the topics of Magi. Right now, Leylin could vouch for himself that most professors in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy could not match his knowledge concerning acolytes.

This was a great foundation buildup for Leylin in the acolyte level.

At least now he was aware of the mistakes from breaking through to a Level 3 Acolyte and even tried to correct them.

One should not look down on such information. If the mistakes are not corrected, even after Leylin becomes an official Magus, his Spiritual Force would stall for a long period of time, with no chance of ever breaking through.

Furthermore, Leylin found some content regarding advanced meditation techniques.

According to these bits and pieces, together with Roman's information, Leylin could confirm that the chairman of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and those leaders of major guilds and magisterium in the South Coast used these advanced meditation techniques to break through.

Hence, they were able to achieve their current levels.

As for the majority of the Magi in the South Coast, as well as many professors in the academies, they did not know of the existence of advanced meditation techniques. They used Grine Water to breakthrough, causing them to remain at the level of Rank 1 Magus for their entire life!

After looking at all these, Leylin completely sealed the notion of using Grine Water to breakthrough.

“It seems like heading towards the Zither Moon Mountain Plains and obtaining the advanced meditation technique that the Great Magus Serholm left behind is necessary for future developments!”

Leylin closed the book slowly and left the library.

Leylin had used the A.I. Chip to record most of the information in the hidden library section. In the future, no matter where he was, he could always perform a search with the A.I. Chip. It was equivalent to carrying a large-scale, intelligent library with him at all times.

“Professor!”

Leylin went to Kroft’s lab and bowed to Kroft, who was carrying out an experiment.

Although Kroft was the same as before, Leylin found that his eyes were somewhat dimmed. It seems that Merlin’s death had slightly impacted this old man of more than 100 years of age.

“Leylin, my child!” After seeing Leylin, Kroft smiled and he looked to be more focused.

“Regarding my suggestion from before, have you decided on an answer?” Kroft asked.

“Yes, Professor!” Leylin bowed once more. “I appreciate that the Leslie Family thinks highly of me, but I wish to try breaking through on my own!”

After hearing Leylin’s reply, Kroft’s expression darkened. However, Leylin’s talent in Potioneering was admirable, even to Kroft. After knowing that Merlin died, Leylin had become his best apprentice, so he could not help but advise again.

“The Leslie Family is a great one, with Potioneering as their niche. In there, your talents will definitely be displayed to the fullest. Moreover, the Leslie Family has sincerity, where the contract conditions are much better than the academy’s.”

Leylin displayed a very keen look, but deep down he had rejected Kroft's proposition without the slightest hesitation.

After the bloodbath, Leylin's position in Kroft's heart was elevated.

Previously, when they spoke, Kroft represented the Leslie Family in supporting him and made an offer to Leylin.

Leslie Family was one of the large-scale Magus Family in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, with many Magi supporting it.

Kroft was one of its members.

Having a long standing tradition and history with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the Leslie Family also possessed a copy of a Rank 1 Spell and Grine Water.

What Kroft suggested was the same contract signed with the academy. The Leslie Family would also give a Rank 1 Spell model and a Grine Water in exchange.

Compared to a contract with the academy, a contract with a family would have fewer restraints. However, this was not in line with Leylin's interests.

No matter how powerful the Leslie Family was, would they be able to provide an advanced meditation technique?

Looking at Kroft, who did not have a single high-grade meditation technique, he already knew the answer.

Under the inheritance of Great Magus Serholm, Leylin hoped that he would never have to join a Magi Family and put restrictions on himself!

Moreover, Leylin was a person who valued freedom. Unless he was in a desperate situation, he would never consider selling himself to be contracted with a family.

“All these, I know, Professor! But...”

Leylin raised his head, his eyes showing an unshakeable resolve and determination.

“I still wish to try on my own! If I were to fail, I promise you, Professor, that I will definitely prioritise and consider the Leslie Family!”

“You...”

Various expressions flashed across Kroft’s face. Looking at the most outstanding acolyte he had right now, he suddenly felt a little helpless. “Alright then! You are only 17 now! Youth is precious, it allows you to make mistakes!”

Kroft looked at Leylin and was reminded of his younger self. His eyes revealed that he was recalling a memory.

“Thank you, professor!” Even though Kroft was unreasonable, Leylin was somewhat moved. He never wanted harm to befall his apprentices. This trait was rather praiseworthy within Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

“In that case... How do you plan to overcome this obstacle to becoming an official Magus?” Kroft asked.

“This...” Leylin shook his head, as if in ‘embarrassment’, revealing an apologetic expression.

“I heard that Professor Dorotte had a piece of remnant information concerning official Magus...”

“Haha...” Kroft laughed, “So this was your plan!”

In the South Coast, the information to become an official Magus was often controlled by large guilds, but there was always an exception!